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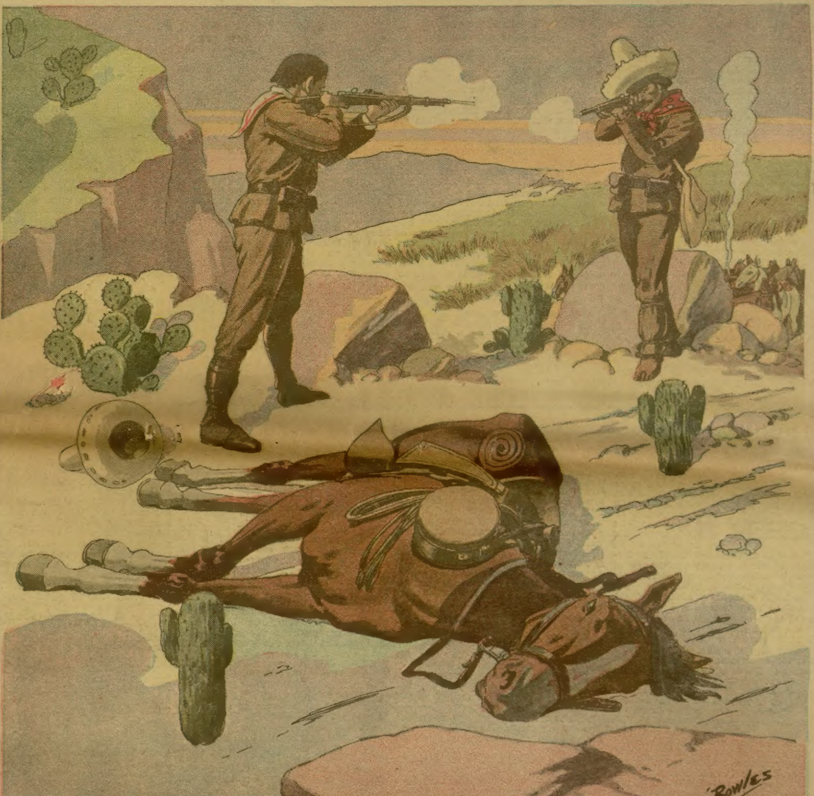

Mexican Treachery

Or, The Message to Medroso

By Hapsburg Liebe

NOT only the State of Sonora, but all of Mexico, was shaken by the revolution, and the time had come for old Ricardo Mores, the richest merchant in Hermosillo, to declare his sympathies. The old Spaniard thought it all over, and went out for a walk with his son. He wished to talk in secret with Felipe. Felipe was 22.

"You must go to war, Felipe," said Mores the elder. "If you do not enlist voluntarily, you will be forced to enlist, and that is a disgrace."

"To which side must I go?" asked Felipe, eagerly.

"To which side!" snorted Ricardo Mores. "In Mexico, the winning side is always the right side. The revolutionists are winning. Join the forces of General Lamar, at San Mateo. Yes, he is a villain. He is almost as great a villain as that hill bandit, Luis Medroso the Spotted, who, I have heard, does his dirty work for him. But—cascaras! What of that? He is winning. And take, as presents from me, a thousand pesos in gold and a thousand good cigars. Lamar will be surprised. He expects my sympathies to go the other way."

Felipe had wanted to go to war. The course his father had shown him was the best course, he knew. He knew that it was better to join the stronger side voluntarily than to be forced into the service of the weaker side.

So the next day Felipe Mores went to General Lamar at San Mateo, many miles from Hermosillo. The insurgent leader appeared to be pleased with the presents Felipe brought, and forthwith gave orders that Felipe was to be made a corporal.

Three days later General Lamar sent for Felipe Mores. Felipe went hastily to headquarters. The revolutionist leader sat beside a window, and he was smoking one of the good cigars that Felipe had brought. Felipe saluted and stood very straight, waiting.

"I sent for you, Mores," said Lamar, slowly twisting at his pointed mustaches, "to give you an opportunity. I am going to send you on a mission of the gravest importance, and it is a dangerous mission. You will have to cross the lines of the enemy, and afterward you will have to cross a desert. But when you come back, you will be greatly rewarded, greatly honored."

Said Felipe bravely, "I am ready to go."

"Very good!" exclaimed the General. He took from the table at his left a sealed envelope. "Take this message to Luis Medroso. You will find him somewhere in the hills that lie a hundred miles to the westward."

Felipe's right hand closed on the message. He saluted, turned on his heel, and was gone. Early that night Felipe rode out of San Mateo on his dangerous mission. Across his saddlebow he carried a Mauser rifle; slung to his saddle were two canteens of water and food for three days.

He rode hard all that night. At daybreak he faced the sharp challenge of a hostile sentry: "Who goes there?"

Felipe bent low, spurred his horse, and tried to ride the sentry down. The fellow leaped nimbly to one side, fired, and Felipe's mount crumbled under him. Felipe rose with his rifle in his hands, aimed and fired once, and then rushed for the nearby bush. There were shouts, and the sound of firing, and bullets whined very close to him. For hours it was like a game of fox and hounds. But Felipe outran his pursuers, and nightfall found him in the desert—without food, without water, but free.

He accepted the situation as the most hardened campaigner might have accepted it. Forty miles, he reasoned calmly, lay between him and that archvillain, Luis Medroso the Spotted, who did General Lamar's foulest deeds for him. They were desert miles and therefore long miles, but that did not daunt the youthful Felipe Mores. The moon was setting, and by it and the stars he laid out his course.

He walked rapidly in spite of the dry sands that closed over his feet with every step. He tried to forget his growing hunger and his growing thirst. Once that night he took out the sealed envelope and looked at it, as tho the very sight of it could give him strength; he set his teeth grimly when he put it back.

When morning broke over the desert waste, he still had twenty miles between him and Luis Medroso. He could see the hills now, and he went toward them with renewed determination. By noon his hunger and his thirst had become great; his stomach gave him a gnawing, sickening pain; his throat was dry and hot; his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth; his lips were sore and parched. He was unused to such hardship. But still he went on doggedly. Again he looked at the sealed envelope, as tho the very sight of it could give him strength. The red seal somehow reminded him of a great bloody eye.

He did not make the hills by nightfall, as he had intended. They were still a few miles away when darkness came. He fought on in the dark. He fought on until the desire for sleep became so great that it overpowered him; then he fell prostrate, with his arms stretched out on the sands ahead of him, and slept heavily.

He awoke as day was breaking. He was racked with pain. His tongue was swollen, and his lips were cracked and bleeding. He staggered to his feet, and once more started for the hills that hid El Manchado. That he was farther from his goal than he had been the night before, he did not notice; in the darkness he had traveled in a circle. By noon of that day he had barely gone three more miles, and he was delirious. Voices came to him now and then, soft and sweet voices, loud and harsh and commanding voices. People he knew and people he had known appeared before him, then vanished. Some of them spoke to him; others did not.

As the red-hot afternoon went on, the weird and horrible drama went on. In the fevered and distorted imagination of Felipe Mores, he saw Luis Medroso, the bandit, just ahead of him. Medroso was beckoning, beckoning, and speaking——

"I am tired of waiting for the message, Felipe."

"I am coming—I am coming," said Felipe, so thickly that one might not have understood.

Luis Medroso grew nearer. He was flashily dressed, and about his waist there was the black sash of a pirate; and that sash bristled with pistols and cutlasses, all of them red and dripping with blood. Medroso's swarthy skin was mottled. Felipe took note as he drew nearer.

"Why are you spotted, Medroso?" asked Felipe.

And it seemed that the bandit replied: "It was the bite of a snake, Felipe. A great snake. It was a mile long, Felipe."

"Here is the message, Medroso!" cried Felipe, and his unsteady hands tried to get at the sealed envelope.

Felipe staggered forward and fell to the burning sands unconscious.

When young Mores came to, he was lying in the shade of a tree. Four men in soiled and ragged uniforms sat near him, and one of them was busily forcing water between his teeth. Felipe sat up and drank. Food was given him, and he ate. Soon he became stronger. He felt for the message. He still had it.

"You babbled of Luis Medroso," said the man who had given him food and drink. "Do you wish to see Luis Medroso?"

"Yes," said Felipe, rising to his feet.

The fellow pointed. "There he sits on his horse."

Felipe quickly recognized the bandit chieftain. His skin was mottled, almost as it had been in Felipe's imagination. Felipe walked weakly up to Medroso, the archvillain who did General Lamar's foulest deeds for him, and delivered the message. Medroso broke open the envelope and read the message. It was short, and it was in a crude cipher. It ran like this:

"I think this man is a spy. Kill him."

Medroso the Spotted drew his revolver and fired. Felipe Mores fell. Such is war in Mexico.

The Jewels of Jezebel

Or,

The Last Days of a King

By T. C. Harbaugh

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CHAPTER I.

IT WAS the Paris of the last days of Charles VI., and that wretched ruler was mad. Now and then he had spells when he could attend to the affairs of his kingdom, but at other times he was a wild beast who smashed the furniture of the handsome apartments of the royal palace and attempted the lives of his attendants.

One night a woman of about 30 might have been seen crouching in a dimly lighted corridor which led to the King's private bedchamber. She was beautiful of form and feature, like all the members of her house, for she was Odette, the Burgundian, who had been brought to Paris to be the mad King's companion. She had played her part so well that Charles had fallen in love with her and seemed to lose his malady in her presence. Odette also loved the King, but she never forgot her rich Burgundian blood, and when that was aroused she was a veritable lioness.

The night outside was in the grip of a storm the like of which had never before held Paris in its thrall. Trees were being uprooted in the parks, and the streets were piled man-high with all sorts of debris. Few were abroad, for no one could keep his feet, and the guardians of the city had taken refuge somewhere and were shivering in the cold gale.

The woman seemed a ghoul in the dim aisle, but there was light enough to show her face, which was white and tense, as if fear controlled every muscle of her body.

Presently a door at the lower end of the passage opened slowly, and a man came out of the King's room. He was handsome of figure and carried a sword. Odette hugged the wall closer than ever, but kept her eyes fastened on the man. She knew him for the Duke of Burgundy, the King's evil genius, a man who was controlled by Queen Isabel. He advanced toward the woman, and fortunately passed without seeing her.

When he had vanished, Odette sprang to her feet with the quickness of a cat and bounded forward till she found herself at the King's door. Opening it without a knock, she paused on the threshold and stared at the man who groveled on the floor playing with three golden balls like a child.

"Charles!" spoke Odette.

Immediately the King looked up and gave her a smile of recognition. Odette went forward and helped him into a gilded chair, then she leaned over him and imprinted a kiss on his forehead.

"You are my Charles!" said the young woman. "France may claim you for her King, but you belong to Odette."

"To you, my love," was the reply, and the King kissed the little hand which rested on his bosom.

"What is all that noise without?" he inquired.

"It is the storm," was the reply. "It cannot harm you in the palace."

"No, not in the palace," and the mad King shivered.

"You have had a visitor, my Charles?" said the woman.

"Aye," answered Charles, "the whelped tiger of Burgundy was just here," and at once the King lapsed into his old melancholy.

Odette drew off a little and watched him.

"I like not that man," she said, in a voice scarce above a whisper. "Tho he came from my country he is but a devourer of men and reputations."

There was no reply. At this moment the door was opened noiselessly, and a face appeared there. Odette started a little. A pair of deep dark eyes looked in upon the pair, but were almost instantly withdrawn.

"The Queen does not tarry long," said Odette, with a smile.

"The Bavarian cat!" hissed Charles, and then he held out his arms to welcome Odette back to him.

She did not cast aside the invitation, and was soon in his lap.

All at once the King felt the old madness coming back to him, for he threw Odette from him and sprang to his feet. There was the old fire of insanity in his eyes, and the next moment he was a raving maniac, tossing the furniture in every direction, whilst the woman leaned against the wall pallid and breathless.

"I am not Charles, but the Supreme of Tartarus!" he yelled at the top of his voice. "I will not be shut up here by the rebellious fiends of hell. I will show them that their King is armed with power, and all shall be thrust into the pit of destruction. And who are you? Where did you come from?"

The King was advancing upon the terrified woman with a dagger in his hand, and his eyes starting from his head in all the fury of madness.

Odette could not speak for terror. She clasped her hands on her bosom and awaited the fatal stroke.

"They sent you here to kill me," roared the demented monarch. "They have armed you with poison of the dagger. Show me the weapon, Medusa. Show me the weapon of death, or I will send you to the eternal shades."

The eyes of the terrified woman had followed the uplifted blade and looked calmly into the King's face.

"If you think I am not Odette," she said, "drive the blade to my heart, and thus lose the only person in France who loves the King."

The spell was broken. Charles passed a hand over his face and retraced his steps. The dagger fell to the floor, where it stuck at his feet. The passion had passed. Once more he was King.

When Odette had recovered her senses she glided forth and took her accustomed seat on the arm of his chair. Then she caressed him as only a lover can do, and at length saw the old light of reason fill his eyes.

"Go to yonder closet," said the King, "and bring me the little silver box you will find on the second shelf."

The King's commands were instantly obeyed, and the box was placed in his lap. His long, bloodless fingers toyed with the clasp for a moment, and the lid flew upward. Odette uttered a cry.

"The jewels of Jezebel!" pealed from her swanlike throat. "They are the accursed gems of the wife of Ahab, who was thrown from the walls by her enemies and was eaten by the dogs. Do not touch them, my Charles, for hath not the prophecy said that whoever owns them shall not live out half his days, and that whoever touches them shall perish miserably?"

The King smiled but did not speak again. Odette took the casket from his hands and placed it in the little secret closet from whence she had taken it.

"What was the Queen's mission here a while ago?" she asked, gliding back to the morose monarch.

"She came from her chambers for the box, no doubt," said he. "I saw her, but made out that I was asleep, and soon she went away."

"The river is the best place for the accursed box!" cried Odette. "Let me take it and give it to the waters."

Charles shook his head negatively.

"The curse will fall upon you if they remain yonder," pleaded Odette. "They will bring misery upon you, sweetheart."

"Why should I fear them?" faintly smiled Charles. "Am I not King of France?"

Odette drew off a pace and watched him solicitously.

"Go!" suddenly cried the King, throwing out his arms. "I feel the malady coming back, and I might harm you, dear."

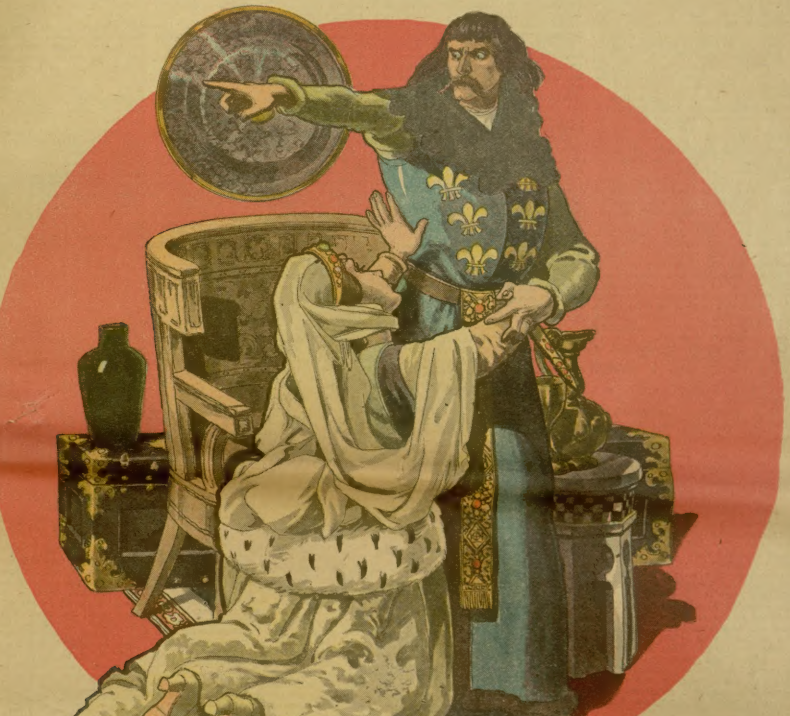
The fair Burgundian, who had noticed the change in his countenance, sprang forward and took him in her arms, but with a madman's effort he threw her from him, and she fell against the wall with a cry. For some moments the King stood and looked at her with glowering eyes that shot mad fire from their depths.

He let her arise without assistance, and with a look at him, full of pity and love, she crept from his presence, while he tumbled back into his chair and closed his eyes. A shiver ran thru his body, and his thin hands clutched the arms of his chair. At last he tottered to his feet and managed to cross the chamber.

Standing at the window, he looked out upon the storm-swept city of his realm. The old spell had come back, but it was not a violent one. Beads of perspiration came out on his forehead, which he covered with his hands.

A figure suddenly appeared on the sward below. It at once caught the King's eyes, and he watched it like a hawk. It was a cloaked figure, and the King could see that a pair of sharp eyes were looking at him. Charles chattered while he looked.

When he saw the cloaked one move toward the palace gate, he drew off and



took a dagger from his velvet surtout. He ran his finger along the edge from hilt to point, and then cast his gaze upon the door. It was a long wait for the monarch, but at length he heard footsteps in the corridor. With the action of an assassin the King stepped to one side, with the blade in his hand.

An instant later the door opened noiselessly, a foot was thrust inside, when, quick as a cat, Charles caught the foot and pulled its owner into the room.

There followed a cry and a brief struggle, but the King struck twice with his dagger, and then threw the dead man whirling across the chamber.

CHAPTER II.

WHY does he not come? He should have been here ere this. Can Boise have failed—he who has the strength of a lion and the cunning of a serpent?"

The man who spoke thus stood in the shadow of a street corner not far from the palace. He was a stout man with but little of his face unconcealed, but a sword might have been seen at the fringe of his velvet surtout, and he wore a dark, glossy feather in his hat. There was something of the nobility about him, and his general appearance carried with it the prevailing mark of that order.

The storm was not yet over, for frightful gusts of wind swept the streets of Paris, and signs were falling everywhere, clattering in their destruction. Now and then a closed carriage rattled by with its windows down, the driver whipping his horses like one mad.

The man at the corner took no notice of these things. He was thinking of something, and it was evident from his words that he was waiting for some one. There is a limit to one's patience, and it had apparently been reached by this lone man in the shadows.

At length the clock in a neighboring steeple began to strike the hours, the man seeming to count them under his breath. At the last stroke he moved a little. Then the nearest cresset, flaring in the wind, revealed his face. It was dark, somber, but handsome. For two dreary hours he had stood there with the solidity of a post.

"Well," he muttered, "if he won't come he won't. Maybe the chances were against him."

Wrapping his cloak about his body, he strolled off leisurely, bending his head to the cold wind, but always looking straight ahead. If any one had followed him he would have tracked him to the Hotel de Nesle, which was the abode of Philip of Burgundy, one of the powerful nobles of his day. He it was who had brought Odette to be the King's companion, and Queen Isabel had sanctioned the bringing.

The great Duke entered the sumptuous building and clattered up the stairs. Entering a room on the second floor, he doffed his cloak and cast it upon a chair. Then he sat down before a blazing fire and stared moodily at the fagots. Something had gone wrong with him that night. Presently a servant came in and stirred the coals.

"Where is the Duchess?" growled Philip, without looking up.

"In bed these two hours."

The man's head dropped again.

"Anything more, my lord?" queried the minion.

"No."

Once more Burgundy was alone. His abstraction lasted some minutes; then he arose with a start, and crossing the room, he took a sword from its rack and went back to the fire. It was a weapon of the most beautiful construction, a rapier, slender and polished. He fondled it with pleasure and finally put it aside.

"I wish I had it in his body," he murmured. "Then I would be at the top of the ladder, then would Burgundy be France instead of the royal imbecile who now professes to be King. But why didn't Boise come back? That is the thing that puzzles me."

He had hardly breathed the last word when the door behind him opened, and a woman in her night garb crept toward him.

"Why are you here?" snapped Philip of Burgundy, casting her a tigerish glance. "I did not send for you. I——"

"It is true you did not, my lord," was the interruption, and a faint smile appeared on the face which was as white as a lily. "I heard you come in, tho your step was like the fall of a feather, and as you did not go to your apartment I thought you were ill."

The Duchess was one of the most beautiful women in France; she had carried her girlish look all her years, and many had wondered why she had chosen for husband such a man as Philip of Burgundy. She had been faithful to him thru all his amours, an angel mated to a tiger, and she adored the man who had made her Duchess of Burgundy.

"Go back to your bed," suddenly said the Duke, in arrogant tones. "I am quite content here."

She gave him a look which failed to melt his heart, but remained standing.

"What is this I hear?" she suddenly asked.

"You women hear everything," he grumbled. "You wait for rumor that you may twist its thousand threads into a rope. But what have you heard?"

"'Tis said that bands of armed men are secretly entering Paris, that they go into hiding as soon as they arrive."

"Well, what of it?"

"That is what we would like to know."

"Armed, eh?" exclaimed the Duke. "Is there a conspiracy against the King?"

At this Philip turned around and fixed his piercing eyes upon his wife.

"Who would conspire against such an imbecile as Charles VI.?" he cried. "Look here, madam. It is not for you to take note of these things. You are but a woman, and should keep out of matters that do not affect you. But what more have you learned?"

"It is said that Louis of Orleans, the King's brother, has been seen with some of these interlopers."

"Oho! A bit of news truly," exclaimed the Duke. "Go to bed, madam."

He was standing erect now, and his finger was pointing toward the door.

"Go, I say," he cried.

With a lingering look the Duchess turned on her heel, and with a "good night" which her husband did not seem to hear, left the chamber.

"So the King's brother is playing a game?" cried he, reddening in rage. "And ten chances to one that the Queen is in it. They want a Charles VII. That is the milk in the cocoanut," and he laughed discordantly. "By Heaven! I now hope that Boise failed tonight in his mission. I must go out."

He went over to the sword rack and took down the rapier he had just inspected.

"'Tis better at close range than a sword," he muttered. "And a Burgundian knows how to handle it."

In a moment he had secured the rapier to his person and put on his plumed hat. He tiptoed down the broad marble stairway of the building and went out into the night.

"The girl, Odette, must know something about these things," he said under his breath. "She is beholden to me for her position, and I'll smoke her out before I seek my pillow."

He walked rapidly till he came to a house better than its neighbors. It was a dark abode, for there was nowhere the faintest glimmer of a light. In another second he had mounted the steps and opened a door. Up a stair he went, at the top of which he turned to the right and groped his way down a lightless corridor. When he paused it was at a door which his searching hand had found in the dark.

The knob yielded to his hand, and he pushed the portal inward.

"Who's there?" cried a woman's voice.

"The Duke stopped instantly and leaned forward.

"'Tis I, Burgundy," he answered. "Where is your light?"

"Do we need a light?" was the reply. "I have retired——"

"What of that?" the man rasped. "However, we can talk in the dark if you prefer it."

"I much prefer it just now. Why come you at this unseemly hour?"

"To ask you a question," was the reply. "It is one of great moment——"

"Don't beat about the bush," came the interruption from the unseen woman's lips. "Get at the gist of your visit at once, my lord."

Philip advanced till his knees touched the coverings of a couch.

"Why does Louis bring so many armed bands into Paris at this time?"

The question brought forth a little ejaculation in the darkness.

"And you have come to ask me that?" said a woman's voice. "You have eyes and ears, my lord. You have your spies, and yet you come to me with such words."

"A paid hireling cannot see everything," was the answer. "You have the best eyes in Paris. But why has Louis done this?"

"Ask yourself," came to his ears. "The King stands in somebody's way. Mad tho he is, he is still King of France. I left him not long ago in one of his tantrums. Had I remained longer I might have been throttled."

"Was he that bad?"

"That he was, my lord."

"But about Louis and his cutthroats? What does it all mean?"

"Your life for one thing," replied Odette. "I suggest that you consult the Queen."

"What, that Bavarian serpent? Do you want me to run you thru? I have my rapier with me, and by Saint Agnes——"

"You might miss me in the dark." The voice ceased suddenly.

Philip of Burgundy found the candle and struck a light. The silken couch was empty!

CHAPTER III.

PHILIP OF BURGUNDY stared at the untenanted couch with distended eyes. Odette seemed to have dissolved into a vapor and disappeared. There was no sign of her going, and the more the Duke gazed the deeper grew the mystery.

All at once he began to sound the wall alongside the couch, but no hollowness rewarded him. At last with a curse he set the light on the table, extinguished it, and bolted from the house.

"I will unravel this mystery later on!" he cried. "I will find out what deviltry is connected with this girl's vanishment," and with like words on his lips he darted from street to street, until he emerged into one which was broader than the others, and a palace arose before him.

It was ablaze with light from top to bottom, and there came to his ears the sound of music.

"The Prince is making glad tonight," ejaculated the Duke, as he listened. "Maybe he is receiving some of the captains of his secret band," and with this he gnashed his teeth and laid his hand on the hilt of his rapier.

The elaborate building before which he stood was the abode of Louis of Orleans, the King's brother. This man and Philip had long been friends, in a way, since they both hated Charles, and were supposed to be of the Queen's party. But now Burgundy's wrath was turned against his old companion, and the longer he regarded the palace with its hundred lights the more rage took possession of his heart.

Presently the gate before the palace opened and a half-concealed figure stole forth. Philip drew his blade and watched it like a lynx.

"What ho!" he cried as the figure drew near. "What makes my Prince so merry tonight?"

There was a little cry from the person whom he had clutched with his disengaged hand.

"You have just come from the merrymaking, and should know what means all this jest and jollity."

The captured man drew back as far as he could, but the grip of the Duke was not relaxed. The point of the rapier was now at his throat, and a deadly pallor held his face.

"Come, my rat!" went on Philip, abating none of his fierceness. "Mine is the sharpest sword in France, and it has tickled more than one villain. Tell me what causes the Prince's merriment."

The fellow winced again.

"He is wining some of his friends," said he. "It is a gala time, for the Duke of Pasta is among them——"

"That doughfaced Italian!" hissed Philip. "Has he come to Paris?"

"He is in yonder."

"That will do. Now go about your business," and a kick nearly sent the fellow upon his head, while Philip laughed at his tumble.

Once more the Duke turned his attention to the palace. It interested him more than ever now.

"I would like to have a peep at this brilliant assembly," he thought. "Why not invade the gardens where the menials must be taking their wine?"

To think was to do with the adventurer from Burgundy, and he immediately pulled the gate open and slipped in like a cat on a nocturnal hunt.

The brilliant gardens behind the palace were not silent. He heard the coarse humor of menials, and drew near, keeping in the shadows as much as possible. Presently he came upon the shadow of a man about his own build, and in another second he had him in his powerful grip.

"To speak is death!" hissed the Duke, at the man's ear. "I want your garb."

There was a stare from a pair of frightened eyes, and the man drew back in horror.

"Come," continued Philip, "strip and give me your clothes. They look like they would fit me. You serve the Prince?"

"I am his second scribe."

"Your name?"

"Gaston La Page."

"A good name, monsieur," grinned the Duke. "I will be Gaston for a while, and I assure you that I will play the part to perfection. Now for the exchange."

With the point of the rapier at his throat, Gaston La Page divested himself of his outer clothing, and stood half-naked before the cool-headed Duke.

"That's it, my man," grinned the Burgundian. "A fair exchange is no robbery," and forthwith he began to bind the man's arms and feet, with his victim too frightened to protest.

When Philip had arrayed himself in the captured garments, which fitted him to a nicety, he proceeded to gag his prisoner, after which he threw him into a clump of bushes where he left him.

Ten minutes later, after having exchanged the secretary's sword for his own, and changed his beard so that it resembled the unlucky man's, he turned toward the palace. There was no cooler man in all France than this adventurer, and he smiled to himself when he found the rear entrance, into which he plunged. He made his way to a staircase, which he ascended till he found a wide hall down which he went, searching for a place from which he could obtain a view of the fete.

In this he was soon successful, for he came suddenly to the main stairway of marble, at the head of which he paused to look upon the scene below.

Philip of Burgundy was now at his ease, for he folded his arms and took in the fete. It was a brilliant scene. The many lights revealed the great room with its throngs, and his lips curled now and then as his eyes fell upon those whom he knew.

He growled a little as his eyes came across the Duke of Pasta, hobnobbing with Orleans at one of the oriel windows, and for some minutes he studied them with intense interest.

"The varlet was right," said he. "The Prince entertains the Duke. A man with an arquebus could get both of them at one shot. The plot is thickening. When two such varlets as those yonder get together the devil's brew is getting hot."

Philip might have stood there longer if he had not seen a handsomely dressed lady move toward the staircase. At sight of her he moved to another place around the corner of the corridor.

"I did not come hither," said he, "to meet the Queen. I wanted a glimpse of the Italian rascal. Having had that, I will go down into the garden, get my clothes, and leave the secretary to readjust himself in his own rags."

He was halfway down the corridor when he paused with a cry on his lips. A mob seemed to be surging toward him.

"Kill the spy!" he heard, till his ears tingled with the sound. "He has robbed Gaston of his clothes, and is somewhere in the palace. Catch the rascal and string him up for his villainy!"

The Duke of Burgundy, in whose ears these words did not sound well, backed against the wall and drew his sword.

"Here's a pretty mess!" he grated. "I've spilled my plate of fish, and must fight for my life. There's no escape but thru the mass coming on. Well, they'll find that the Burgundian lion has teeth. I wish Pasta was at the head of the spawn."

"What's the tumult?" asked a voice at his ear. "Does Prince Louis keep a bear garden?"

It was the voice of Queen Isabel, as well he knew without turning his head. She stood white-faced within arms' reach of him.

"Stand back, madam," said Burgundy. "Go down to the floor below. I will settle with the varlets."

At that instant a door not far away gave in before the mob, and dark figures leaped into the dim light.

Philip thrust the Queen of France toward the head of the stair, and then turned, lionlike, upon those who sought him. On they came with the half-clothed Gaston at their head, the whole crowd howling for his blood.

"Yonder he stands!" they shouted at sight of their prey. "At him, men, and tear him to pieces!"

With the utmost coolness the Duke of Burgundy planted himself firmly on the floor and awaited his enemies. Down below five hundred people were standing in gaping wonder. All eyes were turned to the grand staircase, upon which stood Queen Isabel as white as a shroud.

Suddenly to all ears came the clash of weapons keeping time to cries of conflict. The fight was on.

Fortunately Philip had a good wall at his back and the furious sweep of the sword cleared his front.

"Down with the spy!" penetrated everywhere. "Death to the man who robbed Gaston of his clothes!"

At this there was a mad rush for the man against the wall and the foremost fellow was run thru in the most approved manner. At this the mob drew back, and Philip, leaping over his victim with dripping blade, drove the others aside, and raced for the door leading to the gardens. He was gone ere his enemies could regain their senses, and once in the garden he snatched up his rapier and garments and made for the gate.

"That's what I call fun!" he laughed. "But I've caught Orleans at his game, and merry times are ahead."

Half an hour later he was in bed sleeping like a child.

CHAPTER IV.

"MERRY times" were indeed ahead, for what the Duke of Burgundy had seen at the house of Louis of Orleans had incensed him to a fury. It all came back to him as he sped home that night, and his first thoughts were of it when he awoke in the morning. He had almost forgotten the man Boise, whom he had sent to the royal palace, and now hoped that his man had failed of his mission, which was the murder of Charles VI.

From the hour of his exit from the house of Orleans he had broken with his fellow conspirator, for had he not heard, from the lips of his wife, the Duchess, that Orleans was his enemy? And they had plotted together with the Queen for their coplotter, but now he would shape a different course and show the others that the getting away of the mad King was not to be an easy matter.

Meantime search for the man who had robbed Gaston La Page of his clothes in order to turn a trick of his own had been going on with great effort. Fortunately no one had recognized the Duke, hence the searchers had no clew which was good to the despoiler.

Queen Isabel had been driven home from the Prince's fete, but she was not at ease. One thing more than any other troubled her. She had lost her jewels, the jewels of Jezebel, and that was why she had slipped into the King's private chambers on the hunt for them. These jewels, upon which hung a curse of the centuries, had been a wedding gift from the King, who had scoffed at the prophecy that came with them like an echo from the bloody past. There were no handsomer gems in all the world, and many who praised them shivered when they recalled their story, and turned away vowing that they would not possess them for all the other treasures in existence.

Odette had gone home long before the Queen's arrival at the palace, to be visited, as we have seen, by Philip of Burgundy, and the trick she had played upon him is still fresh in the mind of the reader.

Almost confident that the jewels had passed into the King's hands during one of his mad spells, Queen Isabel, when she reached the palace, glided down a dimly lighted aisle and paused at Charles' door. There was a faint light beyond, as she could see by using the keyhole, and knowing that Charles never locked a door, she gently turned the knob and entered.

There were many shadows in the apartment, but the King was not to be seen. His little bedroom adjoined the one the Queen had entered, and in a moment she was gliding toward it, her eyes on the alert and her steps like a hound's.

Pulling the silken curtains aside, Isabel leaned forward and bent over her royal spouse. Charles was fast asleep, breathing like a child, and the Queen noticed that he was sleeping sanely, with his hands crossed on his breast and his head softly pillowed. She breathed freer as she drew back, and a smile stole over her face.

The curtains of the couch were permitted to close again, and Isabel fell back. She had everything her own way now. The King was asleep—perhaps he had taken a sleeping potion, as was his wont to keep off the spell of madness—and her agile movements were not likely to disturb him.

Then she began to look for the jewels. Fate or fortune led her at last to the little closet, and her breath came fast as she laid her eager hand on the latch.

The door clicked a little as she pulled it open, and it was with difficulty that she suppressed a cry, for before her, where Odette had placed it at the command of the King, was the silver casket which contained the jewels of Jezebel.

Her hand darted forward suddenly. Her ringed fingers closed on the casket, and she drew it forward. She had recovered it at last!

Thrusting it beneath her velvet gown flashing with golden butterflies, the beautiful Bavarian closed the door and turned softly around.

"They beat a good one when they beat Isabel of Bavaria," she chuckled. "The jewels of Jezebel are mine again, and I will see that I am not again despoiled."

She threw a glance toward the King's bedchamber. What did she see? Had the curtains moved? The notion sent an icy chill thru every part of the Queen's body.

Clutching the jewel-box, Queen Isabel was in the act of stealing away, when the curtains parted, and before her stood the King, weapon in hand. Fear seemed to rivet her majesty to the floor. The hidden box almost fell from her hands.

Charles did not move. His deep gray eyes were glued upon his consort, one stockinged foot had been thrust into the larger room, and the Queen saw in his eyes the glint of his terrible malady.

What should she do? The door by which she had entered the room was not far away. A bound would carry her to it, but there was the heavy weapon staring her in the face like a fiend of doom.

A step brought the King into the apartment.

"Put it on the table, madam!" he commanded.

The Queen's guiltiness showed in her eyes. Thoughts flashed thru her mind with wonderful rapidity.

How did he know that she had stolen the casket? Surely he had not witnessed the theft. Perhaps a lie might save her yet.

"I have taken nothing, your majesty," she began. "I came in to see if you were sleeping quietly. I——"

"Put it on the table," was the thunderous interruption. "Put it there, or no longer be the Queen of France!"

Isabel's heart sank within her. She had played her card and lost the throw.

"It is mine, anyhow," she began, as she moved toward the table where the light burned. "It was my wedding gift and——"

Voice failed her. Charles watched her till she placed the casket of jewels on the table and then drew back. He came over to where she was, and sank into his chair. He was strangely calm. She stood against the table looking down upon him, waiting for him to speak again.

"Madam," the King began, in a low voice which gained power as he proceeded, "why the butterfly dress?"

Isabel, instead of looking down, met his gaze with a woman's stubbornness.

"Must I let you dress me?" she inquired, pursing her lips haughtily.

"I ask not that, but the butterflies flutter only at fetes," and Charles glanced at the clock on the wall. "'Tis past midnight, madam. Whose fete was it?"

"It was Prince Louis'."

"And you never told me."

"I did not deem it necessary. Am I not Queen?"

"But who made you such? Who decked you with a crown over all the princesses of Europe?"

"You, Charles."

"And a devilish day it was when I made you Queen of France to conspire against me, to imbibe into my heir, Charles, hatred of his father, to join my brother against me, and leave no one to love me but the girl Odette."

"You have made a pretty plaything of her, anyway," smiled the Queen.

There was no reply. For a moment he pushed the casket of jewels back and forth as he hummed a hunting song, but all at once he ceased his byplay and looked up at the Queen. In another instant he had touched a silver call-bell which sent its jingling sounds afar.

There was a heavy footfall in the corridor without, like a man running. A second later the door was flung open, and a bearded giant, dark of face, plunged headlong into the room. Charles' finger covered the white-faced Queen.

"Take her away, Hugo!" commanded the King. "Take her to her bedchamber, and see that she goes at once to bed."

Isabel's face went red.

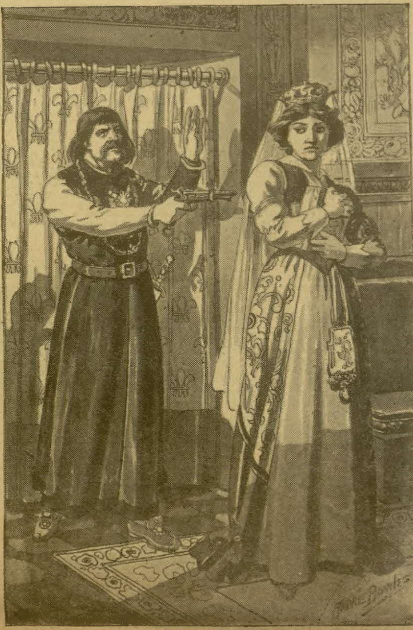
"This is insult unbearable!" she cried. "To be touched by yon wretch is contamination."

"Oh, I wot that Hugo is a thief as well as the Queen of France," laughed the King, in reply. "You're both on a level. Obey me, Hugo. Take the Bavarian snake away."

"If you dare!" exclaimed the Queen, drawing a dagger fram her girdle. "I will not be touched by such as you. Your hands would pollute a murderer."

The brawny brute glanced from King to Queen. Then, with an oath, he plunged at the latter, beat down her daggered hand, and lifted her from the floor. In another moment Isabel was shrieking all kinds of vengeance in the devil's grasp, and the mad King was pounding the table in unchecked glee.

The continuation of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.



"Put it on the table, madam!"

* * *

Costly Correction.

To illustrate the democratic spirit that prevails in the British volunteer army, this story is told in Punch.

A company of the sportsmen's regiment was being drilled at New Forest. The sergeant, an elderly stableman, said to one of the young recruits, who happened to be the brother of an earl:

"Head up, Montaig!" (So he pronounced the name.) "Head up, chest out, shoulders back."

"My name isn't Montaig—it's Montague," said the young man.

"Very good, Monta-gue," said the sergeant. "For speaking up like that you can just do four days' fati-gue."

THE MICHAUX Z-RAY

Or, The Criminal Investigator

By Harry Stephen Keeler

[Copyright 1916 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

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CHAPTER VIII.

DUMFOUNDED, Billy stared at the back of the figure, which was now making its way hurriedly along the sidewalk. The description of the fellow, as he had hastily secured it, tallied exactly with the two other descriptions he had heard that night; one from the lips of his aunt, and one from Lilywhite, the little colored maid at the Devonshire. And while it was assuredly true, of course, that more than one inhabitant of a great city possessed the same outward semblance as another, the fact that this man carried in his hands such a peculiar and characteristic satchel was a fact which, by the laws of probability alone, proved him to be no other than Victor Michaux himself.

But what in the name of all that was logical, he asked himself as he stood there staring backward from the gravel walk, was this Victor Michaux doing in Peter Harbison's home? Never until tonight had he even heard the name. And never had he heard either Carolle or her uncle refer to such a person, or in fact to any other person who might be working along the lines that Michaux was supposed to specialize in.

A sudden chill of apprehension struck him—a chill which arose from the fear that the bearded man's visit had boded no good to the occupants of the house. So he tore his eyes from the back of the man, now almost a hundred feet away from the gate, and glanced quickly toward the lighted window of Peter Harbison's parlor. And there, in the soft glow of the lamp, he caught a glimpse of a slender young figure just seating herself on the piano stool. It was Carolle—dressed in her gown of pale blue silk that he liked so well. But as his eyes strayed to her yellow-gold ringlets, held tight to her head by a black velvet band, she spun slowly around on the revolving stool, and sat with her hands in her lap, making no attempt to play the instrument. Was she looking out of the window toward him, Billy wondered? No, it could not be, for he was in the shadow of the big lilac bush; and her china blue eyes, covered by their long, dark lashes, seemed to be gazing pensively, even sadly, across the room at—nothing.

So, perceiving that his presence was not yet known to the girl he loved, a sudden impulse—an impulse that found its inception more from a desire to guard her than from curiosity—seized him to follow Michaux, to see where the man's steps were carrying him at such a rapid pace.

He skipped down the gravel walk, slipped noiselessly thru the iron gate, and cut across the street, which at this point was shrouded in the shadows of the giant elms. Once on the other side, however, he hurried south at his swiftest gait, and by the time he had covered two hundred feet, he caught sight of the man he was following just passing a gas lamp on the other side.

So he slowed down immediately and allowed the distance between them to increase slightly. And as he walked along, he began to wonder whether Michaux—for Michaux it must be—would dare to go back to Mrs. Hunter's home and spend the night, knowing that she was dead. But as he pondered over this question, he saw the bearded man pass under the bright arc light at Goethe street, wheel with sudden ferocity, and stare intently in back of him. And then and there Billy congratulated himself that he had had the foresight to take the other side of the street, for it was plain that Michaux either suspected or feared that he was being followed. And now, more than ever, Billy's desire to know where the man was heading for grew to strange proportions.

Michaux evidently overcame his fears, for he covered the next block without looking behind him once—unless he did so as he passed thru the various tree shadows. But at the hissing arc light on the corner of Division and LaSalle he again made a fearful scrutiny of the sidewalk in back of him. Then he set down the black satchel, and appeared either to be resting or else pondering over the question of whether to turn down Division street, with its gayly lighted nickel shows, its street car lines, and its crowds of young people, or to proceed ahead in the gloom of LaSalle avenue.

As for Billy, however, he began to realize now that his own position was a suspicious one, for twice a young couple passed him and drew away as tho in fear, while he stood stupidly in the shadow of an elm. So at the passing of the third pedestrian, a woman, he bent down and fumbled at his shoelace, wondering whether Michaux were going to stand undecidedly in that one spot for the rest of the evening.

But the latter evidently decided to pass up the gayly lighted thorofare, Division street, since he suddenly picked up his square valise, crossed the car tracks with a rush, and continued straight south on LaSalle avenue. And this, fortunately, released Billy from his own peculiar position, allowing him to take up the silent trailing once more by walking slowly on his own side of the street.

Under the arc light at LaSalle and Elm, Michaux again stopped and looked carefully in back of him. But seeing no one but a small boy and girl playing with a rubber ball, he struck diagonally across the corner and turned eastward on Elm street.

"By the great horn spoon!" ejaculated Billy, as he slipped behind a convenient tree crate. "He's not making tracks back to Aunt Hunter's house on Locust street, after all."

This time he remained where he was till Michaux again got the lead by several hundred feet. Then he took up the pursuit doggedly, for he had forgotten Carolle, forgotten his own fears, almost forgotten all that had happened that night, in his desire to know where Michaux was heading in such a nervous condition.

He was able to discern now, tho, that the man with the valise was walking much more slowly, and Billy surmised that he was studying either the general appearances or numbers of the dark houses that lined Elm street. Clear to Clark street Michaux proceeded at a dragging pace; and then, suddenly, he disappeared around the corner.

Still keeping on the other side of Elm street, Billy forged cautiously ahead. And when he reached the corner he cast his eye quickly along the dark block of dingy-looking stores and buildings that ran southward. But not a human being was in sight.

He had lost his man.

CHAPTER IX.

BUT Michaux could not have gone very far from the corner, he concluded instantly, in the short time that had elapsed before he himself had reached Clark street. So he crossed the street, and standing in the shadow of a huge vacant garage that filled the whole block, he studied the row of buildings across from him. The corner building itself was a red brick structure which held on the ground floor the store of an insect exterminator. The next building was also of brick, but of a far lighter hue. This held the store of a decorator and wall-paperer. But the third building was neither of brick nor stone; in fact, it was an ancient wooden structure, evidently built long before the stringent fire laws of the city had been passed. From its dingy, gray clapboards the paint was peeling in great scabs, and, in the first floor window, close by a lighted transom bearing the number 1132, was a feebly illuminated sign which read:

ROOMS TO RENT
SINGLE OR DOUBLE
BY NIGHT OR WEEK

Since the next building was a substantial brick like the first two on the block, and housing a tinsmith's shop, Billy decided that Michaux had surely disappeared in the entrance of No. 1132. But if he had, then that fact alone would seem to indicate that he was searching for new lodgings.

As Billy stood there wondering whether his solution of the chase was to remain a partially obscure thing, a darkened window on the third floor front was suddenly illuminated. And at the same time two figures became plainly visible in a small curtainless room. One was the man of the brown suit and the brown beard; the other a frowzy-looking woman clad in a calico wrapper. As for the valise, it stood in plain sight on the bureau, silhouetted against the gaslight.

Evidently Michaux was suited in some arrangement, for he pressed something in the woman's hand, and she immediately withdrew, closing the door behind her. He then gazed slowly about him. This done, he stepped to the door and tried the lock. He took down the valise from the bureau and stooped over. But when he stood erect again, his hands were empty. And Billy knew on the instant that he had secreted the Michaux Z-ray machine some place—and in all likelihood under the bed.

But as he pressed back against the brick wall of the deserted garage, he suddenly saw the bearded man glance apprehensively toward the uncovered window. Barely a second afterward the latter strode to it and jerked down the shade, with the result that the light was all blotted out with the exception of a thin band near the sill. But as Billy stood quietly in that one spot, this thin band, too, disappeared. So it was plain either that Michaux had turned out the gas in sudden fear, or else had left the room.

Billy decided to hold his ground for a few moments longer, and see whether this latter supposition were true. And true it was, for not a minute later the house door of No. 1132 squeaked open, and Michaux stepped out on the sidewalk, his hands now empty. Only for a second, however, did he remain standing there. Then, plunging his hands in his pockets, he struck off jauntily southward—perhaps in the direction of Locust street—and Billy caught the faint bars of a popular tune that emanated in a cheerful whistle from his lips.

So he decided he had done enough shadowing for the night. He had located Victor Michaux's new address. He knew the location of the Michaux Z-ray machine. He knew that Michaux was in dread fear that he was being followed. And he knew—but for the life of him could not understand why—that Michaux had been in the same house with Peter Harbison and Carolle Harbison that evening.

So he did what any young fellow who has an engagement with the girl of his heart would do. He dropped his pursuit of the bearded man and retraced his steps along Elm street and up to La Salle avenue, mentally constructing a set of adroit questions which he could put to Carolle to elicit the fact of who Michaux was, and what he was doing in her uncle's home. By the time he reached the beginning of the 1300's he glanced at his watch and found that it was already four minutes past nine. So he quickened his pace and finally turned in at the ornamental gate for the second time that evening.

A girl—the same girl who had been sitting at the piano twenty minutes earlier—was standing in the dark shadows of the porch, leaning against one of the supporting pillars. It was Carolle. He waited in expectancy for her usual cheery:

"Hello, Billy McClintock."

But the usual words did not come for some reason. With a peculiar leaden feeling in his heart, he stepped up quickly on the porch.

"'Lo, Carolle," he said. "I'm pretty late tonight, dear. And you'll be surprised and shocked at all I have to tell you."

"Hello," was the only reply she made, and that in a strained voice.

As he stepped closer to her, and she stood there, looking so attractive and reaching just to his chin, he leaned down to kiss her full on the lips, as she had allowed him to do in the last few weeks, contrary to the ironclad laws laid down by Laura Jean Libbey and others. But she slipped away from him suddenly as tho anticipating such a move on his part. Barely a second later she was drawing over an extra rocker to the end of the porch.

"Won't you—won't you sit down, Billy?" she said. And again he caught that strange tone in her voice.

He dropped into the rocker which she had drawn forth for him, and she took up the adjacent one without a word to break the silence. But something was wrong. He knew it. The belief gripped him as nothing else ever had in his life. And he could connect her unusual attitude with only one of four things: Had she decided to throw in her lot with Harley—or Kent—or Tinkler? Or was the visit of Michaux to her uncle the cause of this unnatural silence? With his mind in a whirl at this sudden turn of affairs for him, he resolved mentally to cast all his adroit questions to the wind, and ask her outright who the individual was that had walked down the path a short while before, as well as the reason for this sudden change in her usual cheery nature.

"Carolle," he burst out, "I was going by the house about a quarter of an hour ago, because I——" Here he paused, wildly ransacking his brain for an explanation of why he had passed the house without coming in. "Because I wanted to drop in for a second up the avenue to see one of the boys who works at the office. At any rate, when I passed the gate here I saw somebody coming out. It's—it's none of my business, of course, but could I ask who that was?"

She turned toward him in the darkness as if to reply. But at that instant a passing automobile swerved slightly and illuminated her face for a bare fraction of a second. And in that short space of time he saw her lips parted as tho in confusion—and a look in her eyes that baffled him from its pronounced suggestion of fear.

CHAPTER X.

THE light from the automobile lamps left her face as suddenly as it had come, and he found himself no longer able to make out her features in the semi-darkness of the porch. With his heart pounding so forcibly that he could feel it in almost every part of his body, he waited for her answer. But the answer seemed to be retarded. He was just about to ask her again, when she broke the silence:

"What—what an odd question, Billy! Did you—that is, were you really interested in who he was?" A pause followed, and then a long sigh.

"I know, dear," he replied, feeling very ill at ease, "that it isn't any of my business who comes out of your house—or rather your uncle's house—since we're not married yet. But I thought—well, I imagined that he looked familiar to me. I'm sure—almost certain—that I know who he was."

"You know him?" she cried, a tiny gasp escaping from her.

But she seemed to realize suddenly that she was betraying the intensity of some emotion under which she was laboring. All feminine creatures have a latent ability to act in crises—to portray what they do not feel. Billy had heard that fact stated many times, and he wondered whether this were the case when a long merry laugh came from her lips. But it seemed so like her old, natural laugh that he decided it must be genuine.

"You're right, Billy," she went on. "We're not married yet. And so you have no real right to ask who any person is whom you see coming out of here. But I—I—really don't see why you asked. Won't you tell me?"

A feeling of anger—of being baffled—seized him. So he decided to persist in his line of questioning at all costs.

"Carolle," he said, laying his hand on top of her slender one on the rocker handle, "I'm asking you questions and you're asking me questions in return. And I'm wondering if we won't be quarreling soon at that rate. That's something we've never done yet. I've asked you just a simple question: Who was the man with the short, brown beard who came from your uncle's house here a short while ago? And you haven't answered it yet."

Had she been doing some quick thinking, some wild casting about, while he was asking his question for the second time? Or had she come to the conclusion that she was arousing his jealousy, and so decided to tell him the truth? At any rate, her answer now came quick and firm on the heels of his last sentence.

"Of course I'll answer your question, foolish boy. You saw a man with a brown beard and a black medicine case leave the house, didn't you? Well, that was Doctor—Doctor Ostergaard of the New York Life Insurance Company. Uncle Peter, you know, has decided to take out a new policy. And he was being examined tonight for—but you know all about those things, Billy," she broke off, with a sudden weariness in her voice. "We've all been thru those life insurance tests." And again, into her voice, came what might have been an uneasy little laugh, or just the laugh of a girl who fears she has offended the man she has promised to marry.

Billy thought for a moment about what she had said. To his mind came an explanation that would easily account both for the facts as he knew them, and her information that the bearded man was a Doctor Ostergaard of the New York Life. But he dismissed it while he thought of the things that he didn't wish to think of at all.

That Carolle was lying to him, lying deliberately, he felt in every fiber of his being. But, if she were, then she must have a purpose in doing so. And this being the case, no amount of cross-questioning or cajolery, probably, would induce her to tell any other story, now that she had given out this one. But, like any man in love, he did not want to believe that she had lied to him. So his mind kept skipping back to the explanation he had just forged.

There was no absolute certainty that his aunt's lodger, Victor Michaux, was the same man who had walked down the gravel path. This bearded fellow surely did resemble a doctor, particularly in his white features and his hirsute adornment. The black satchel in his hand could easily have been a doctor's medical case. Then, too, there were dozens of black cases of all sizes to be seen on the streets every day. And there was assuredly no reason why Peter Harbison should not be taking out a new life insurance policy.

But, on the other hand, if this were really a Doctor Ostergaard, why had he looked so furtively behind him at every street-corner arc lamp? Why had he hesitated so long at the intersection of brightly lighted Division street and dark, shadowy LaSalle avenue? Why had he made his way to a dilapidated frame rooming-house on North Clark street, close by the din and dust of the passing trolley cars? Was it a professional call or an inspection visit of an infected room? If so, why had he left his black satchel there and reappeared on the street without it?

No, Billy concluded, without his explanation he could not make these points fit. And so, as a drowning man snatches at the proverbial straw, he seized on the one possibility that could re-establish Carolle in his eyes for truthfulness—and yet be in perfect accordance with that day's tragic occurrences.

The man in the brown suit must really have been a Doctor Ostergaard of the New York Life Insurance Company. And he had actually come to examine Peter Harbison. At the same time, however, he was the inventor of the Z-ray. Under the name of Victor Michaux he had taken lodging with Mrs. Hunter the previous Thursday night, for some reason concealing his true identity from his landlady. All this being so—and Billy heaved an audible sigh of relief—Carolle could not have known the truth about the man. As for her actions and her rather odd attitude, both were really due to a nervous condition, perhaps at being cross-questioned, maybe at seeing him for the first time since her deferred vacation trip to St. Louis, possibly on account of having taken a long, tiresome railroad journey that day. So he patted her hand happily and remarked:

"Let's forget all about your visitors, Carolle, and instead we'll talk about something nice—something mighty nice. Yourself—for instance!"

"Beware!" she said, with a ripple of real laughter. "If you get a woman started on a fascinating subject like that she might never stop."

"What of it?" he returned, smiling down at her. "I'm quite willing to listen. We'll——"

But his face clouded up instantly in the darkness, for the events of the past few hours suddenly rushed back in his consciousness. And the memory of his aunt's peculiar death and her strange, staring look seemed to depress his spirits as tho with an invisible hand.

CHAPTER XI.

BILLY turned to Carolle once more.

"There is plenty to talk about," he said, in a much lower voice. "I want you to tell me all about your week's vacation. And then I'll have to tell you of an unfortunate happening—the death of my aunt, Mrs. Matilda Hunter. She——"

"Oh!" she broke in quickly. "Your Aunt Matilda is dead, Billy? How—when——" She stopped altogether. It was plain that she was surprised beyond all description. "When did she die, Billy? I'm so, so sorry to hear of it. Let the vacation trip go and tell me about that first."

So he launched forth in a description of how his aunt had come to his room at six o'clock that evening to visit him. But he wisely decided to say absolutely nothing as yet about the black valise—at least until he could learn more about this Doctor Ostergaard who was masquerading under the name of Victor Michaux. He told her as briefly as possible how he had left Mrs. Hunter sitting in his rocking chair and had gone

HANDY HUSBAND

Knew How to Get Part of the Breakfast

"'I know one dish I can prepare for breakfast as well as any cook on earth,' said my husband one morning when the cook was ill and he had volunteered to help get breakfast. He appeared with his dish and I discovered it was Grape-Nuts which, of course, was easy to prepare for it was perfectly cooked at the factory, but it was a good illustration of the convenience of having Grape-Nuts about.

"We took up Grape-Nuts immediately after returning from a five years' sojourn in a hot country. Our stomachs were in bad condition and we were in poor health generally.

"In a day or two we liked Grape-Nuts better than any other kind of food on the table. We both gained steadily in health and strength, and this was caused by Grape-Nuts and Postum.

"A friend of ours had a similar experience. She was seriously ill with indigestion and could find nothing to eat that would not give her heartburn and palpitation, especially at night.

"She found that a small dish of Grape-Nuts with cream made her a satisfactory supper and gave her a comfortable night's rest. In a short time she gained several pounds in weight."

"There's a Reason." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

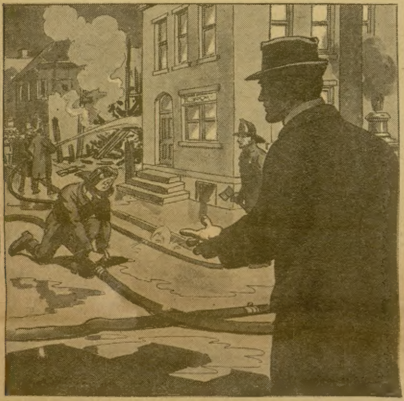
downstairs to answer the 'phone. Then he described his tragic discovery when he returned. After he had finished, she leaned forward and asked:

"But what was the cause of her death, Billy? You haven't told me what Doctor MacPherson called it."

He waited several seconds, wondering if she even dimly suspected the deadly machine that her Doctor Ostergaard was carrying about with him from house to house. Finally he answered simply:

"'Heart failure', so MacPherson said. I was feeling pretty rattled at the time, and the landlady was away, too, so the doctor offered to get the body off to Gordon Smith's, the undertaker, for me. And I got out of there to cool down and to telegraph her sister." He stopped again. "From the telegraph office I went out to Douglas Park to see a man named Schwenmauer. I came back, called up the Devonshire, and found that everything had been taken care of by MacPherson and the colored maid. And here I am."

"It's pretty hard to realize, isn't it?" she commented at length. "Occurring so suddenly—and in such a rapid rush of events? Was she very close to you? Does the death hurt?"



It was a pile of debris.

"Well, Carolle," he explained, "the relationship between Aunt Matilda and myself was really more like a warm friendship than a blood connection. While her death, and particularly the manner of her death—" here his face took on a peculiar twist which she could not see—"have stunned me, I can't say that I feel as grief-stricken as another person might. She knew me only while I was a baby, and during the last few years since she came here from Aurora."

He stopped and looked out across the dark street. Then he turned toward her again.

"But, Carolle, it's hard for me to be unhappy since you told me that you're going to become my all-the-time sweetheart—instead of just my Sunday night girl. And you know what a fellow's all-the-time sweetheart is, Carolle? It's his wife! I know we can get along so far as our income goes. And as time passes things will come better and better for us. It's just the question of getting together the amount your uncle stipulates. Within a year—but what a long year it's going to be—I'll have that five hundred dollars for the flat furnishings. So do you wonder that I'm inclined to be happy?"

She drew her slim hand very suddenly from beneath his own—and he noticed that she stiffened up in her rocker.

"Billy," she asked, "would—would—that is—would you do me a favor—if I asked it of you? I mean by that would you do something—and not ask any questions why—but just do it—and——" She seemed utterly unable to express herself clearly.

"I don't understand," he said, mystified. "I'd certainly do anything within reason. And if you asked me not to question it—I'd certainly stick to my agreement. What is it you'd like me to do?"

"But will you promise faithfully to do it?" she pressed him hurriedly.

"It's promising in the dark, but—yes, I promise."

"And do you promise not to ask me why? Or to ask any questions?" she persisted.

"I've gone so far now that I might just as well go the limit," he replied. "Yes—I agree not to question your demand. And for Heaven's sake, dear girl, what is it?"

"You will be surprised," she warned, "and perhaps hurt. But sometimes there are things that are done for our own good that hurt, and at the time we never realize it."

"Carolle," he demanded firmly, "there's been nothing but conversation in cryptograms tonight. And this—this Doctor Ostergaard or some one else seems to have thrown a peculiar wall between us. I tell you I'm all confounded. I said once that I'd do anything you asked of me. And I assured you as well that I'd ask no questions. So what is it that you want done?"

"Simply this," she ventured. "You—you told me that you loved me a while back—and you even asked me to be your wife. And I said 'yes'."

"And it was the biggest small word in my dictionary," commented Billy, uneasily.

"But I—well, I shouldn't have said 'yes'. I——"

"Not said 'yes'?" he almost shouted, aghast. "Not said 'yes'?" he repeated dully, hardly able to believe his ears, his air castles trembling violently on their foundations. "Why shouldn't you have said 'yes'?"

A long pause followed, while a lump swelled up in his throat that bade fair to choke him. Then he heard her words.

"No, Billy, I shouldn't have said 'yes'. I—I—well, it wasn't the thing I should have said. And what I want to ask of you was that you'd forget that you proposed to unhappy me—and that I said 'yes.' And maybe—maybe later—if you want to—if you still care——" She stopped abruptly, evidently realizing that she was floundering. "But the future—times change—and people change. And who knows what the future holds forth?"

He was completely dumfounded. His first thought was that she had met some young fellow on her trip to St. Louis, and that she was laboring under the spell of one of those peculiar vacation infatuations that seize every one at some time of their life. Then into his brain jumped Harley, Kent, and Tinkler in succession. But her peculiar request, occurring as it did directly after this Doctor Ostergaard's visit to the house, was in itself so suspicious a circumstance that he began to connect it up in a multitude of ways.

So he broke in, his voice trembling in spite of him:

"Why, Carolle, dear, do——"

"Not dear," she corrected. "Just—just Carolle."

"Well, then—just Carolle. Have I offended you? Are you tired of me? Is our happy little dream to be blown into atoms because of something that has come up? Why do you want me to forget my proposal to you? For what reason——"

"But your promise," she returned faintly, "was that not only would you do anything I asked of you, but that you would do it without asking any questions. And if you actually loved me as much as you once said you did, then you'd adhere to your promise. And I asked of you only to forget that I ever agreed to become Mrs. Billy McClintock. And then later—maybe after we know our own minds—if you still wanted to ask me your question—but of course you might not want to ask me again. Have I made it all clear?"

"Deucedly, devilishly, pointedly clear," he stated calmly. "So we didn't know our own minds, Carolle? So we were laboring under a youthful delusion of love, after all? I am wondering only whether it was Harley, Kent, Tinkler, or Doctor Ostergaard who persuaded you that you were making a mistake. So we——"

His words, however, were cut short by the opening of the door that led from the porch into Peter Harbison's parlor. In the doorway, illuminated by the glow from the lamp within, stood Peter Harbison himself, his tall, straight figure and short-cropped, white mustache giving him that pronounced air of steadfastness of purpose and rigid adherence to the ordinary ideals of truth, industry, and business ethics that had always characterized him, among his few acqaintances.

"How do you do, McClintock?" he remarked, in a more friendly and human tone of voice than he usually employed. "I heard from Carolle that you were coming over tonight." He stepped out on the porch and seated himself on the wooden railing. "So I thought I'd celebrate the last warm night of the year by investing in a brick of ice cream." He glanced toward Carolle, who had remained silent ever since his entrance. "Carolle, suppose you go in to the kitchen and partition the ice cream into three geometrically perfect divisions, and bring it out on plates."

She flew from the porch as tho she were only too glad to escape. After she had gone, Peter Harbison turned to Billy.

"Well, McClintock, how's everything going with you? Not angry at me, I hope, because I told you that you'd have to show me a bank balance of five hundred before you could steal my little orphaned girl?"

"Not in the least," snapped Billy. He looked straight toward the older man on the railing. "Mr. Harbison, did you make application for a very large life insurance policy this time?"

"Good Lord, McClintock!" laughed Harbison. "What a funny question to put to me! Why, I haven't applied for a policy—much less thought of applying for one—since I took out my first one, nineteen years ago."

CHAPTER XII.

HARBISON waited a moment and then asked suddenly: "But what ever made you ask me that, McClintock? Why did you think I was dabbling in life insurance?"

But Billy was too stunned to reply for a few seconds. So Carolle had lied to him after all—and the man who she had declared had come to examine her uncle had done no such thing. Was he a Doctor Ostergaard, then? It no longer seemed so probable. Yet the discovery, coming on top of her request that he forget his proposal of marriage and her reply to it, pointed more or less in one certain direction. She had somewhere become acquainted with this brown-bearded man—doctor or layman—and had fallen violently in love with him. He had told her something of his secret, and she was taking desperate pains to help him shield his identity. And he, Billy McClintock, was to be ousted for this new rival. But at the very thought of it, he had to restrain himself from gritting his teeth. There would be some one to reckon with in such a contingency as that, he told himself, and that person was William T. McClintock. By the sheer workings of fate he held the secret of this Doctor Ostergaard's—or, as he preferred now to think of him, Victor Michaux's—present place of abode, which no doubt was temporary. And he held in his possession the secret of where a machine more dangerous than a clockwork bomb reposed—the Michaux Z-ray machine.

If he should go straight to the police and tell what he knew about the dread potentialities of that machine—and particularly about its first human victim—Victor Michaux would be open to

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The Journal of the Michigan State Medical Society comments thus in a recent issue:

"Symptoms of arsenical poisoning are very similar to those of cholera infantum; undoubtedly a number of cases of cholera infantum were really cases of arsenical poisoning, but death, if occurring, was attributed to cholera infantum.

"We repeat, arsenical fly destroying devices are dangerous and should be abolished. Health officials should become aroused to prevent further loss of life from their source. Our Michigan Legislature, this last session, passed a law regulating the sale of poisonous fly papers."

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nothing less than the charge of manslaughter. The courts were severe upon such points. And if Carolle were to know the truth—but she must have known the truth or part of it, for why should she have fabricated the name of Doctor Ostergaard and shown such agitation when she learned that his description was in Billy's possession? But he caught himself up. If Carolle loved this man, why should he step in, and like a revengeful rival, wreck her happiness?

All these thoughts ran riot thru his mind in far less time than it takes to enumerate them. After the slightly protracted pause which followed old Harbison's second question, he hastened to explain:

"My asking you about life insurance must have been due to a faulty memory, Mr. Harbison. I have an impression that somebody told me you were taking out a new policy. But I dare say it was some one else they mentioned."

Peter Harbison seemed to be satisfied with the explanation, for he said no more on that score. He kept his seat on the railing, however, and chatted with Billy about a host of trivial subjects, the very discussion of which required all the younger man's self-restraint and composure, now that the incomprehensible chasm had arisen between himself and Carolle. But he held himself together and gave no indication of the emotion that was stifling him, and all the while he was turning over three possible modes of action in his mind: Should he confront Michaux himself in the lodging-house at 1132 North Clark street? Should he wait until Professor Schwenmauer returned from the University of Wisconsin, and consult with him on the subject of rays, Z, X, Y, and other kinds? Or should he take the matter straight to the Chicago department of police—or better, the chief of the detective bureau?

Finding that his conversation was commencing to drag again, he described his aunt's sudden death in his room. As before, however, he omitted all mention of both Michaux's connection with the case, and of the square, black, leather satchel. Harbison seemed to be interested—intensely so; but once, as he leaned forward slightly and his face stood for a second in the glow of the parlor lamp, Billy noticed with a start that he was chewing savagely on his upper lip and looking far out into space with unseeing eyes.

As he was pondering over these evidences of abstraction on the part of Harbison, Carolle suddenly appeared on the porch carrying a tray containing three dishes of ice cream. The three sat in the semi-darkness and ate, but the conversation was very one-sided, for Carolle ventured no remarks of her own, and replied only when a question was addressed to her by her uncle or Billy.

Finally, however, Peter Harbison collected the empty plates on the tray and stood up.

"I'm going on up to bed," he stated. "I'm thinking that——" He stopped and looked up again at the dark sky, studded here and there with a faint point of light. Then, for a long half-minute he seemed to be lost in his own thoughts, utterly absorbed in the consideration of something, oblivious entirely to the two young people near him. But suddenly he caught himself up sharply and asked: "What was I saying a minute ago? My thoughts were going wool-gathering."

"You said you were going to bed," ventured Billy, politely.

"To bed? Yes—yes—of course. I'm rather absent-minded tonight. Well, McClintock, good night to you. And good night, too, Carolle. You lock up the house." He stepped to the door and passed in. A second later he thrust his head out. "By the way, Carolle, watch the window locks carefully. Also the door chain. Don't take any chances on any night prowlers. Good night." And they could hear his heavy footsteps ascending the inner stairway.

For a minute neither of the two said anything. Then Billy blurted out:

"Carolle, dear, did you mean all you said a while ago tonight? Do you really want me to forget that I asked you to be my wife—and that you said 'yes'?"

"I do," she answered simply. Then a long pause. "And some day—some day if we feel the same, you can ask me again."

"I see," he said pointedly. "I see." He arose. "Well, Carolle, if it's to be good-by we might as well not prolong the agony. I'm sorry that I've inflicted my company on you for so long as I have; sorry that your feelings have changed so."

She made no reply. But she, too, stood up.

"Perhaps," she said rather faintly, "time will teach you many things and make you a lot wiser, Billy McClintock. Time will do it, Billy."

"I won't ask you for a good night kiss," was his frigid comment on her words. "As long as——"

"No," she said hurriedly, stepping close to him, "but we've had too many happy times to part like this. And so I'll—I'll kiss you good night, because——"

To his dumfounding she threw her arms about his neck and her lips met his in a long kiss that lingered for several far-reaching seconds. An instant later she tore herself away and flew inside the porch door. And still a second later, as he stood with his hat in his hand, wondering if he had dreamed the mad events of the whole evening, and particularly those of the last half-hour, he heard the key turn softly in the lock of the front door—and he was alone.

He tiptoed down the steps and out to the dimly lighted street. He reached the corner before he began to recover his scattered senses. Then he stopped in his tracks and commenced studying the situation desperately. Had Carolle kissed him so tenderly to make the parting less severe on him? Or was there, for some reason, a tiny spark of love for him still lingering in her heart? He found this last supposition an exceedingly pleasant one to dwell upon, but it did not solve the question of what his next step was to be.

Almost automatically he found himself walking slowly back toward 1132 North Clark street, retracing the exact path he had covered so stealthily earlier in the evening. In his mind was an ill-defined expectation that his conflicting motives might become crystallized into something definite if he could only study the house once more where Victor Michaux had taken lodging. And he felt, too, that he might even meet that individual face to face, unprotected by his diabolical machine, and have it out with him either by words or blows, but nevertheless as man to man.

By this time he was nearing the corner of North Clark and Elm streets. He wondered if it had been raining, for great pools of water glistened under the arc light on the corner. And as he swung around the corner he noticed with surprise a blue-coated police officer stationed near the curbing and a small group of late stragglers standing in a semicircle on the sidewalk, close to where No. 1132 should be.

But he was to come upon a still greater surprise when he had traversed another ten or twelve feet. The spot, which two hours before had been covered by an antiquated frame building, was now covered by a framework of wet, steaming, blackened timbers—and a pile of debris.

"Further chapters of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

* * *

About Himself.

"Bob," said Torkelson to his nephew, "you talk too much about yourself. Now, I want you to get along nicely with this young woman and that's why I took the two of you out riding in my machine.

"When I was under the vehicle fixing it I heard your line of talk, and hanged if it wasn't about yourself all the time. What makes you young people so anxious to talk about yourselves? One would think that your own wonderful experiences were the sole topic of conversation on earth. That's the last way in the world to make a hit with a girl.

"Ask your mother if this isn't so. Your mother's friend, Mrs. Booper, would be all right if she could stop talking about herself for a little while. But she can't. She comes over to invite your mother to a tea fight. All well and good. Your mother is willing to go. But pretty soon Mrs. Booper starts to talk about herself. 'I don't usually invite the boobs in my neighborhood,' she says, 'altho I often feel that I should. I am a good kind of a person and feel sorry for the outcasts, you know, and I like to let them come and see how grand I am.'

"That doesn't do. Your mother gets mad and doesn't go.

"In your case you call on a young lady all dressed up in the latest style, and you are a good-looking young man, and you make quite a hit. The girl can see that you come up to the fashion-plate models in every particular. But pretty soon you begin to talk about yourself, and you begin to say that business cares engross you so that you don't waste much time with girls, and that it requires a lot of time to undertake being a devil of a fellow.

"Dodging girls and social obligations that are thrust upon you is wearing you out, you say, and you insinuate that the girl ought to feel flattered that you condescended to call. But that is not nearly so thrilling to a girl as having a fellow insinuate that he always has time to be at her service and can be depended upon to fill in any old day.

"If you bore a girl impressing her with your importance and grandeur you have taken the first step toward the slippery chute. It may be all very nice to have people kissing your hand and salaaming, but look out for the toboggan. Look at Julius Caesar. He was always talking about himself, and he talked himself out of a mighty good job.

"You'll lose a mighty fine girl if you don't find another topic of conversation."

* * *

What's in a Kiss?

There is on the Breton coast a little seaside resort nestled in an admirable setting of rocks and groves and equipped with a Grand Hotel of the beach which has been transformed in these sadly changed days into a hospital for the wounded soldiers of France. For all that there are other people on the sands besides the convalescent heroes, and especially any number of pretty women, always ready to lend their help to the doctors in charge. Among these a charming dancer from the Theater Varieties in Paris was particularly lavish with her attentions to the soldiers. One day when she was present a big, dark fellow from the South manifested an invincible repugnance to a bitter dose which, by the doctor's orders, he was to drink.

"If you are a good boy and do what the doctor tells you," said the dancer, "you may kiss me."

Instantly, and with one gulp, the big fellow swallowed the stuff, wiped his great mustache, and claimed his reward. It was all done so prettily that even the head surgeon permitted himself to smile.

But the real comedy began when the head nurse, a matron turning 50, appeared the next morning and announced:

"Every one of you who takes his medicine will be allowed to kiss me."

The effect was immediate. Each and every patient made a face and put down on the table beside him the dose which he had been about to swallow.

Now the head nurse is goodness itself and her goodness is well spiced with wit. She was the first to laugh at the result of her invitation. Then she pretended to be angry.

"Very well," she cried, "every mother's son of you that hasn't taken his medicine in five minutes will be condemned to kiss me."

The soldiers laughed in their turn—and every glass was hastily picked up and promptly emptied.

* * *

A Grand Outburst.

A group of highbrows and authors assembled in the lobby of a New York hotel and began to discuss ardently the difference between good English and bad English. They cut loose with a long string of wisdom about style, diction and metaphors—all of which bored Col. Franklin P. Morgan immensely.

"The grandest outburst of language I ever heard," he contributed to the discussion, "was given by old Senator Deboe of Kentucky, during the Goebel trial. On that occasion his entire testimony was:

"'I seed Jack Chinn with his knife drawed.'"

* * *

Discovered.

"You are evidently very fond of books, sir," said an old gentleman to a younger man in a car. "May I ask you whom you consider the best novelist of the day?"

"Jenkins, undoubtedly," said the young man. "There's nobody can write like Jenkins. Why, sir, the circulating libraries can't supply his novels fast enough!"

At this moment another man entered the car and addressed the young man:

"Halloa, Jenkins!" he said. "How are you today?"

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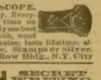

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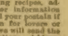

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At Barclay House

Or, A Detective Puzzle

By Will Lisenbee

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CHAPTER XIX.

IT WAS about dusk when Hartman came to Barclay House, bringing a telegram for Mark from the chief of the Chicago police, advising him that Mrs. Lois Pemberton was on her way, and would arrive the next day.

That was not all; the station agent had been to Black Hollow, had called on the mysterious trio there, and had an amazing story to tell.

"I think we have got to the bottom of the affair at last," he announced. "I have been to Black Hollow, and have found the woman who was in Basil Smoot's room when he met his death. She told me the whole story from beginning to end. Basil Smoot committed suicide!"

Mark nodded slowly. "Yes," he said, "and Sam Wood, the stable boy, was a witness to it!"

Hartman gasped. "Good Lord! How did you get that?" he cried.

Mark told him, giving Sam's story.

Hartman's face was radiant. "By thunder!" he cried, "that is fine! Don't you know that but for his being a witness to the suicide the woman's story would have been hard to believe—by any jury?"

"You are right," nodded Mark. "But go on with your story, and when you are thru I'll give you another page of the history of Basil Smoot—which was given to me by Miss Turk."

"Well, to begin with," went on Hartman, "Mrs. Anna Badger, sister of Mr. Dennis Berkley and Miss Vera Berkley, was the divorced wife of Basil Smoot—whose real name was Benjamin Stormfield. She married him when she was a mere slip of a girl of 17, in the village of Ringgold, Georgia. Inside of a year they separated, and Stormfield went West; she heard nothing of him for years. She was remarried some two years after his departure, to Nathan Badger, a wealthy planter in Georgia, who died soon after their marriage. Then she came to St. Louis to make her home with her brother, Dennis Berkley, who was the owner of a number of mines in the lead and zinc mining districts of southwestern Missouri. Mrs. Badger, who was looking for an open field for investing a part of her fortune, joined her brother in his enterprises, and as they were successful, Miss Vera, who had received a rich legacy from a deceased relative, was taken in as a partner, and the three organized a mining company thru which their operations were conducted.

"They became interested in the Black Hollow mine, after it had been opened, and as there was some litigation regarding the lease, nothing has been done there for some time. The trouble, it appears, came from certain capitalists who held interests in the mine and were desirous of freezing out the small holders, and it was to foil them in their attempt that Dennis Berkley got into the game to checkmate the conspirators.

"To do this, it was necessary for him to make a run for it, and get possession of the property at a certain date, and this is what brought the three so hurriedly to the mine. Now, a strange circumstance which projected itself into the affair was the fact that Basil Smoot, or Benjamin Stormfield, to use his real name, held an interest in the mine, and was associated with those who were endeavoring to freeze out the others. A short time before they left St. Louis for Black Hollow, he called on Dennis Berkley and told him of his interest in the mine, but gave assurance that he was opposed to the course being pursued by those with whom he was associated. He said that a little matter of business would take him to the vicinity of the mine, and that he hoped to see Mr. Berkley there, in which case he promised to give him assistance in the project of foiling the designs of his confreres. But he made no mention of Mrs. Badger, nor did she see him till the night of the tragedy at the hotel.

"About eleven o'clock on that eventful night, Dennis Berkley was seized with an attack of acute indigestion, and as no relief could be afforded by the usual remedies he employed for such attacks, Mrs. Badger decided to come to Barclay House, where she hoped to reach a doctor over the telephone, for she was alarmed at the condition of her brother. Just as she was approaching the hotel, coming across the grounds from the big road, she met Stormfield, who was taking a stroll thru the grounds. They recognized each other, as the moon was shining brightly, and after a formal greeting, and learning of her errand to the hotel, he told her that if she would come in the matter would be attended to at once. He also informed her that he had some papers which he desired to send to Mr. Berkley, and that he would go to his room and get them, and that as there was a telephone in his room he could call up the doctor at Dogwood at the same time.

"He led the way up the outside stairway to the veranda, and stepping thru the window, bade her come in and use the 'phone while he got the papers. The light was burning, and while Mrs. Badger felt some reluctance about entering, she felt that such an act of distrust under the circumstances would be a rather shabby requital of his kindness and courtesy.

"She had barely entered the room, however, when she regretted it. He was standing in the middle of the room, and there was a look on his face, now revealed by the light of the lamp, which gave her a vague chill of fear. His eyes glowed with a fierce light, and he at once began to upbraid her for having, as he declared, deserted him and wrecked his life. Even now she has but a confused remembrance of what he said, for she was too terrified to move or speak, fully believing she was in the presence of a madman. But suddenly he drew forth a dagger and plunged it into his own breast. Then, as he fell back on the bed, she tried to scream, but reeled half-fainting against the side of the bed, the shock of it almost depriving her of her reason. She has a confused remembrance of drawing the knife from the wound in the vague fear that he might use it on her, and of slipping thru the window and closing it after her, to prevent, as she thought in her confused state of mind, his following her. How she got back to her brother and sister she does not yet remember. When she reached the place she fell fainting in the door, and not till today could she remember a single incident of her night's adventure. Her brother, who had recovered in a manner by the time she returned, fully believed she had been frightened on her way to the hotel, and that the shock of it had rendered her mind a blank for the time being.

"She quickly recovered from her faint,

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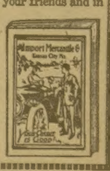
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but she could tell nothing of what had occurred. She could remember starting for Barclay House, but that was all. The rest was a blank. Today, however, memory returned, and she told me the whole story. How I made the acquaintance of Dennis Berkley and his sisters had its beginning when I met Miss Berkley in the persimmon patch, as I told you last night, and now that some one has been found who can corroborate her story, I shall call again to acquaint the three with the good news. Dennis Berkley was at first inclined to believe the whole story the product of a hallucination, for they had heard nothing of the tragedy at Barclay House."

When Hartman had finished his story and had listened to Mark Sheldon's recital of the facts told to him by Katharine Turk, he put out his hand and grasped that of Mark in a warm pressure of enthusiasm.

"We've been having to follow a crooked trail in the dark," he said, "but we now see the light. All we lack now is the story that Mrs. Pemberton has to tell when she arrives. She still holds the missing link in the chain of the mystery." He paused and drew from his pocket a folded piece of paper, which, on being unfolded, revealed a bit of red clay. "I found this," he went on, "where the path from Black Hollow crosses the edge of an old mine dump. This is, as you will see, a very red, sticky clay, or ocher, and it corresponds exactly with the marks which we saw on the sill of the window of Basil Smoot's room and on the veranda; and the discovery of this clay in the path, and the finding of a track in the path near Black Hollow, the dimensions of which tallied with those of the shoe print found in Smoot's room—these were the first bits of evidence I got that connected the people at Black Hollow with the tragedy at Barclay House. But now there will be no further use for these, since the whole matter has been revealed by the parties who were witnesses to the tragic affair; and as I said before, nothing remains to clear the whole mystery but the testimony of Mrs. Lois Pemberton. And she is to be here tomorrow."

CHAPTER XX.

AND the next day Mrs. Lois Pemberton, the beautiful widow of a deceased millionaire, came to Barclay House.

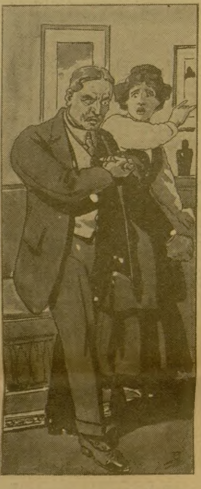
She was slim, supple, blue-eyed, and not over 32. There was something about the calm beauty of her pale olive face, the contrasting color of the lips, and the shadowy light in her deep blue eyes that made one want to look at her again.

"I thought it best to run down and explain the whole matter myself," she said to Mark Sheldon, as they sat in the big sunny parlor of the Barclay House. "There are so many things connected with the strange affair that I felt it my duty to come that I might explain everything." There was a shadow on her pale face and in her deep blue eyes as she paused to put back a lock of pale gold that fell upon her forehead.

Briefly stated, this is the story that she told: She had met Stormfield a year before at a social function in Chicago. He was a man of reputed wealth, the owner of rich mines in Colorado and Nevada. He visited Chicago frequently, and was frequently the honored guest of those who figured prominently in the best society of the city. He was a man of refinement and attractive personality, yet modest and unassuming, and at times there was in his manner and countenance an air of sadness and melancholy. He was noted for his thoughtfulness, his kindness of heart, and he gave liberally to charities. Circumstances threw him and Mrs. Pemberton together frequently, and a close friendship sprang up between them.

There was to be a fancy dress ball, and Mrs. Pemberton was to go as Cleopatra. On the evening of the ball Stormfield put an ebony case in her hand, saying that he would feel honored if she would wear the necklace it contained.

"I was amazed to find that the box contained a superb diamond necklace," Mrs. Pemberton said. "The beauty of it dazzled me, and while I was charmed with it and felt how appropriate its splendor would be for the character I was to represent, I hesitated to accept the loan of it. But his earnest insistence overcame my scruples, and I wore it; for a woman's vanity is always ready to plead its own case. He explained to me that night that the necklace was not his, and told a strange story of the circumstance of its coming into his hands. It had been stolen from the daughter of a rancher out West—a friend of his—and all efforts to recover it had been futile. Nearly two years later, however, a rather tough character who had been suspected of having broken open the safe at the ranch and stolen the necklace with other valuables, was thrown from a horse and fatally injured. Before he died he sent for Stormfield, confessed to having stolen the necklace, and gave it to Stormfield with the request to return it to its owner. But the rancher and his daughter had gone to England some time before, and their names had appeared among those who went down on the ill-fated Utopia. And so he was keeping the necklace till he could find some one who had a lawful right to have it.



He plunged it into his own heart.

"He did not call for the necklace the next day, as he had promised, but sent me a brief note saying he had been called to St. Louis on urgent business, and would be at the Vendome Hotel for a few days. I thought he acted a little strangely. I did not like the idea of keeping the necklace in my possession, and I was thinking of having it placed in my safety box at the bank when a matter of business called me to St. Louis. So I took the necklace with me, intending, if I should see him, to return it.

"On arriving at St. Louis, I stopped at the Vendome Hotel, but learned that no Mr. Stormfield had registered there. I went out in the city for an hour, and on my return my maid handed me Mr. Stormfield's card, on which was written a request to see me for a moment in the hotel parlor, at seven that evening. It was the time of the carnival of the Veiled Prophets, and the city was turned over to the riot and panoply of the merrymakers.

"When I entered the parlor at the appointed time I found Stormfield waiting for me. I told him that I had brought the necklace with me, as I wanted to return it to him. He apologized for his abrupt departure from Chicago without calling for the necklace as he had promised, and said that he had just learned that the young lady who owned the necklace had not been lost at sea as was reported, and that it was his purpose to go to her at once and deliver the necklace to her. He said she had gone into the country with some relative, and was staying at some health resort. While we were talking my maid rushed into the room, frightened and almost in a fainting condition, saying that my room was being plundered by burglars dressed in carnival garb.

"Mr. Stormfield and I followed the maid toward my room, which was near the parlor, and as we passed thru the hall we saw two men emerge from my apartments with their booty. My first thoughts were of the diamond necklace, and I cried out something about it to Mr. Stormfield, and he rushed for the fellows like a flash. They ran for the stairs and he after them. Seeing I could do nothing, I gave the alarm and called up the office and told of the robbery, adding that the robbers were at that moment trying to make their escape from the hotel.

"In a few moments the house detective came to my room, and I told him of my loss and gave, as best I could, a description of the robbers. He had already notified the police, he said, who were on the watch for the robbers, and he assured me that every effort would be made to capture them. But no trace of them could be found, for at that time the streets were congested with a gay crowd who were enjoying the carnival, and in such a crowd it was easy to escape.

"Much to my surprise, Mr. Stormfield did not return, and as the hours dragged by without bringing a word from him, I grew alarmed and called up the house detective and told him of Stormfield's failure to return after leaving in close pursuit of the robbers.

"He did not know Mr. Stormfield, and said that no such person was staying at the hotel, so I gave him a description of him, and he took his departure, promising to do everything in his power to get trace of the missing man.

"The next morning I offered a thousand dollars reward for the recovery of the necklace. Then, leaving word with the detective to wire me in case of any new developments in the case, I returned to Chicago. Now, the strange part of the affair is, that after my return I received a letter from Stormfield—a hastily scrawled note, mailed on the train, in which he told me that he had recovered the necklace from the robber, and was on his way to Dogwood, a little town in the wilds of the Ozarks, where he expected to find the owner of the necklace and return it to her. And this note was signed 'Basil Smoot.' I could not understand it at all, and I began to suspect that he was losing his mind.

"I showed the letter to my lawyer, and then it was that I learned that a man giving the name of Basil Smoot had been murdered at a hotel near Dogwood, accounts of which had been published in all the papers. And then the dreadful truth flashed upon me that Stormfield had been murdered, and as I was shown copies of the papers in which the murdered man's picture appeared, I recognized it as the likeness of Benjamin Stormfield. I was greatly shocked at the discovery, and I soon learned that others who knew him had also recognized the picture as that of Stormfield's. Word was at once wired to the sheriff here, and also to Stormfield's only living relative, a sister in Paris. The sheriff reported that the body had been claimed and taken away to St. Louis by a supposed brother of the deceased. The police of St. Louis made an investigation, and the body was found in the city morgue, having been brought from the Union Depot, where it had been unclaimed.

"The affair has upset me completely and shocked me more than I can tell, but I felt it my duty to come immediately. Has no clew yet been found to the murder?"

"There was no murder," answered Mark Sheldon. "It was a case of suicide." And he told Mrs. Pemberton the whole story of the strange affair. "There is no doubt," he added, "that Mr. Stormfield was mentally unbalanced, and tho the tragic sadness of it is deplorable, there is a certain sense of relief in the knowledge that he was not the victim of a murderer."

Mrs. Pemberton's eyes were wet with tears when, a little later, Katharine Turk came in and took the visitor to her own apartments.

CHAPTER XXI.

IT WAS not till a week later, after the capture of Dave Shepherd, the man who had appeared in the role of brother to Stormfield and claimed the body, that the last link in the mystery was revealed.

In his confession Shepherd told the

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whole story. He and his pal had selected the day of the carnival as one promising the best success for gentlemen of their profession. After plundering the room of Mrs. Pemberton, they were chased by a stranger who they afterward learned was Basil Smoot. Shepherd got out of the hotel and dodged into an alley, closely pursued by Smoot. There he tripped and fell, and Smoot was upon him in a moment. The box containing the necklace slid from his pocket and fell open on the pavement. Smoot snatched it, but not till Shepherd had seen the blazing diamonds and realized the value of the necklace. There was a moment's scuffle, and then Shepherd, finding himself no match for his antagonist, broke away and ran for it, turning back into the crowded street and mingling with the throng. As he did this he saw Smoot return to the street, and instead of going into the hotel, as Shepherd expected he would, he set out at a rapid walk down the street.

"I got the tip right there that the fellow was a crook himself," Shepherd declared, "and that he was going to make off with the loot which ought to have been mine. That made me mad. To have him enjoy the fruits of my labor and me get the blame was sort of rubbing it in; so I shadowed him. Luckily I came upon my pal as I was shadowing the fellow, and I put him wise and he joined me. Our idea was to run the chap down and make him cough up the swag or divide with us, and we didn't let him get out of sight. He took a cab, and we tumbled into one with orders to follow him. While in the cab we got rid of our carnival togs, and when our cab pulled up at the railroad station beside the other cab, we got out as boldly as you please, having no fear of being recognized. We followed Smoot into the station, saw him buy a ticket to Dogwood, a little town away off in the Ozarks, and then we did likewise, feeling sure that Smoot was a crook and was hitting the trail for the tall timber.

"We boarded the train with him, and when we reached Dogwood we slipped off on the side opposite the depot and watched the game from a distance. To our surprise, he took the hack for the Barclay House, a hotel up at the Springs, but knowing we had him treed, we decided to wait till the next morning before beginning operations. So we took lodgings in Dogwood. The next morning we were mighty glad we had not gone up to the hotel, for we got the news that a murder had been committed at Barclay House, and later we learned that the victim was the very man we were shadowing.

"Of course, that spoiled our game—for a while. But we made another try. After we had learned that Smoot was unknown, and that there was no one to claim the body, we fixed up a scheme. I hit the road back to St. Louis, got me an appropriate set of togs and a letter which was to be my credentials—furnished by a friend of mine who had access to the district attorney's office, and then I came back and turned the trick. But it was a water haul, as far as the diamond necklace was concerned, and on the way back to St. Louis I left the train, deserting the body and letting it go on to the city, where it fell into the hands of the authorities, relieving me of an unpleasant and embarrassing job."

* * * * *

Katharine Turk had no difficulty in establishing her right to the diamond necklace. And altho Mrs. Pemberton insisted on paying the thousand dollars reward she had offered, Katharine would not listen to such a proposition, and gladly paid the amount herself.

And there was not a prouder young man in all the State than J. Frank Hartman, when he came into Mark Sheldon's room at the Barclay House, one evening, and displayed the check for a thousand dollars sent to him by Katharine Turk.

"I feel as if I hadn't earned the money and should not take it," he said.

"Nonsense!" cried Mark. "You'll never succeed in the business till you learn to accept what the gods provide. It is part of the game—not only the detective game, but all others."

"But good Heavens, what could I have done but for your help in the case?" protested Hartman. "Where do you come in?"

Mark laughed. "Why, I have won the greatest reward a man can win by being in this case," he said. "Miss Turk has just promised to marry me!"

Hartman's face was all aglow as he put out his hand to grasp Mark's. "I can well understand that," he said. "What greater reward could any one win than a good woman's love?" And as he said this he was thinking of that day of rain and storm when he stood in the little shack with the girl from Black Hollow—the girl with the dark, witching face; and he felt the touch of the slender hand on his arm again, and her half-whispered "yes" was echoing thru his soul like a sweet strain of music. And what is all the world when compared to Youth and Love and all its thousand dreams?

The End.

* * *

Auto Argument.

"I'd like to know the kind of car to buy now the motor show is open," remarked the friendly man to the stranger, as they watched a taxi chauffeur put on a tire. "I was fully decided on a Jimcrack until I sent to some of the other makers for their catalogs and since I've read the 700 booklets I'm in a quandary. I have learned the good points of all of them, and have read between the lines where they try to point out the vital defects in the other fellows' machines. I don't think I'll ever be happy when I do buy my auto. I'll imagine I have a piece of movable junk for my money when I could just as well have bought a real car. If I had stuck to the Jimrack and taken the Jimrack agent's word for it when he said his car was a marvel, I would have peace of mind, anyway."

"Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise in the auto game," said the stranger. "The Jimrack is a nice machine—for some people—but give me a Popinjay for mine."

"So you prefer the Popinjay, huh?" queried the friendly man. "See, I never heard of the Popinjay till now, but the fact will worry me! How can I be happy in a Jimrack if I think Popinjays will be passing me on the road?"

"Say," spoke up the chauffeur who was putting on a tire, "if you want a real bus get a Sixplus. Some class to that, believe me!"

"I don't agree with you," interrupted the stranger. "The Sixplus is like the Sparkix; it won't stand up on endurance runs. Give me a car with a long wheel base every time."

"What part of the car is the wheel base?" asked the friendly man. "The Jimrack agent didn't speak about that."

"Good reason why," said the stranger. "It hasn't got any.

"And there are lots of other things it hasn't got. Take my advice, if you don't want a Popinjay, get a Zipper Four. The upkeep is low and it's a nifty boat. I'll take a Zipper every time if I can't get a Popinjay. And let me give you another straight tip! Whatever you do don't buy a Whizkar. It has works in it like a dollar watch."

"Cut out that knockin' the Whizkar!" exclaimed the chauffeur, angrily. "I drive a Whizkar, and——"

"So long, boys, but that's my opinion!" said the stranger, walking away.

"I—I wonder what kind of car that fellow rides in?" said the friendly man.

"Say, ol' scout," replied the chauffeur, "the car that guy rides in has 'State Street' marked on the front of it

* * *

Not to Let With It.

Mr. Smith is a respectable gentleman, who, tho he has been married several years, has not yet lost his admiration for a pretty girl. Having occasion to remove from his present abode, he was recently looking for a suitable house and discovered one to let in a quiet street. Upon ringing the bell a piquant and lovely Irish girl came to the door, looking charming in her black dress and mob cap.

"Is this house to let?" asked Mr. Smith.

"Yes."

"Are you to be let with it?" he said, with a bland smile.

"No, sir," answered the maid, demurely, "I am to be let—alone!"

* * *

Getting Rid of Him.

"That feller Morgan Buttles is terrible unpopular," said one mountaineer.

"We'll have to git rid o' him somehow," replied the old moonshiner.

"Yes. But we don't want to do nothin' in a way that ain't legitimate an' customary. You know he has p'litical ambitions."

"I've heard so. But he ain't got no pull."

"Yes, he has. An' you an' your relations want to stand back o' me when I put the case up to our Congressman. We'll git Buttles app'inted a revenue inspector an' then let nature take its course."

PRINCE ALBERT

the national joy smoke

makes you want to fire up your old jimmy pipe!

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PRINCE ALBERT tobacco throws open the gates to *every* man fond of a pipe or a makin's cigarette—*it's so friendly!* Just makes smoke joy possible for all degrees of tender tongues and tastes! The patented process cuts out bite and parch! And you can't get better proof than the fact that Prince Albert is today smoked not only throughout the United States, *but all over the world!*

First thing you do next, locate that old jimmy pipe or the makin's papers; invest 5c or 10c for a supply of P. A. And fall to like you are on the right track. For Prince Albert is better than the kindest word we ever have said about it. And you'll find that's a fact!

You can buy Prince Albert everywhere in the toppy red bag, 5c; or the tidy red tin, 10c; in pound or half-pound tin humidors or in the handsome crystal-glass pound humidor with sponge-moistener top that keeps P. A. fit-as-a-thoroughbred!

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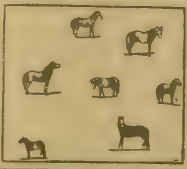
On the reverse side of this tidy red tin you will read: "Process Patented July 30th, 1907," which has made *three* men smoke pipes where one smoked before!

Solve This Puzzle and Win a Prize



Here are seven ponies in a pen. By drawing three straight lines you can put each one in a pen by himself. If you can do this we will send you as a prize, a packet of five beautiful embossed postcards lithographed in rich colors, and also a certificate for 1500 Free Votes in our grand contest for two beautiful Shetland ponies. All you have to do is to enclose a two cent stamp in your letter to pay postage and cost of mailing.

Two Ponies Given Away

Remember the Ponies will absolutely be given away in the grand contest which we will tell you all about. Send your answer at once so you can be entered in this great contest. In case of a tie for a pony one will be sent to each person so tied. Full particulars by return mail.

THE PONY MAN, Dept. 61 Des Moines, Iowa

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5 YEAR GUARANTEE

Sample Watch Free

Genuine full standard size railroad style watch with locomotive on dial and locomotive handsomely engraved on back. Full nickel plated case, extra dust proof [illegible] ONLY $1.50 [illegible] ONE EXTRA WATCH FREE. Order today as this offer may not appear again. Address R. E. CHALMERS & CO., 538 So. Dearborn St., CHICAGO, ILL.

Boys! Earn $1.00 to $5.00 a Week

[illegible] urday Blade, Chi[illegible] Scout. These are [illegible] very town wa[illegible] can buy from [illegible] bundle so that they come to you [illegible] You have a paper to sell to every man, woman or bo[illegible] Easy to sell and b[illegible] steady customers. Only one report for you to make [illegible] ch week [illegible] ery nickel you take in [illegible] Blade, Ledger, Farming B[illegible] ners and [illegible] you take in on Lone Scout [illegible] You can't lose. You don't send us an[illegible] the papers. Each active agent for our papers is [illegible] Lone Scout [illegible] of the Lone Scouts, who sends badge and certi[illegible] tructions in this great organization. [illegible] a complete agent's outfit. We tell you [illegible]

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I accept the agency for your 4 papers. Send me as many copies of each as you think I can sell the first week. I will be pleased to [illegible] certificate of membership [illegible] booklet of instructions from Chief Totem.

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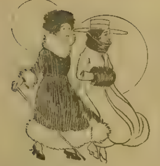


Bess—"Listen! Belle's fiance used to break mules for a living."

Dolly—"What of that? He is rich now."

Bess—"True! But the idea of Belle's thinking she can boss such a man as that!"

◆

At Palm Beach.

"That pretty girl is always falling into the water on boating parties and making some fellow jump in after her."

"I guess it is the psychic influence of her favorite duck suit."

Little Pete's Defense

At a meeting of the Canadian-American Society in a Maine town one evening recently, two members of the organization fell to disputing which had the smarter children Joe Belanger was proclaimed the victor when he came to the front with the following:

"De nodder day my leetle boys Pete was go on de schoolhouses wid hees leetle dog De teacher get mads wid de boy and tol' heem for go back on de house jes' so quick he can't and took de dog and never bring heem back som' more. Leetle Pete do jes' w'at de teachers is tol' it. Bimeby leetle Pete is go back on de schoolhouses and jes' so soon he set heemself downs, som' leetle dogs was com' in and stan' up on front of leetle Pete. De teacher was get mooch mad and say 'Pete, w'at for you bring back dat dog w'en I tol' you never bring back dat dog som' more?'

"Leetle Pete is stan' up and say, 'Teachers, dis don't was de sam' dog; she's nodder one. I get two of it.'"

◆

Never Argued.

"As a matter of fact, I suppose every man has some argument with his wife," said the worried-looking man.

"Henrietta and I never argue," replied Mr. Meekton, complacently. "Once in a while I make a remark, and Henrietta shows me exactly where I am wrong. But we never argue."

A Waste of Time.

They were dining off fowl in a restaurant.

"You see," he explained, as he showed her the wishbone, "you take hold here. Then we must both make a wish and pull, and when it breaks the one who has the bigger part of it will have his or her wish granted."

"But I don't know what to wish for," she protested.

"Oh, you can think of something," he said

"No, I can't," she replied; "I can't think of anything I want very much."

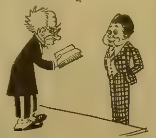
"Well, I'll wish for you," he exclaimed.

"Will you, really?" she asked

"Yes."

"Well, then, there's no use fooling with the old wishbone," she interrupted, with a glad smile, "you can have me."

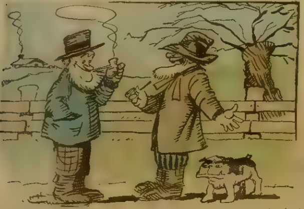
◆



Professor—"What are you laughing at? At me?"

Student—"Oh, no, sir!"

Professor—"Then what else is there in the room to laugh at?"



Silas—"That city feller that bought the Jones place know much about farming?"

Hiram—"Not much! Why, only last week he complained that my dog was killing his woodchucks!"

Taking Him Down.

An ostentatious member of a certain county council whose father is well known as a retired omnibus driver was one day displaying a large seal he usually wears, representing St George and the dragon, and while several bystanders were expressing their admiration of [illegible], its owner remarked in solemn [illegible]

"[illegible] one of my ancestors is—aw—supposed to have killed the dragon—aw—don't you know?"

"Dear me," inquired one of his hearers, who knew something about him, "did he run over it?"

Thought They Were Fits.

He was middle aged and untraveled For forty-five years he had lived in the country. At last he made a trip to the city.

There, the first time in his life, he saw a schoolgirl go thru her gymnastic exercises for the amusement of the little ones at home. After gazing at her with looks of interest and compassion for some time, he asked a boy who was standing near if she had fits.

"No," the boy replied "Them's gymnastics"

"Ah, how sad!" said the man. "How long's she had 'em?"

◆

Couldn't Believe It.

One evening Smith jitneyed to the suburbs to call on his friend Jones, and while they were sitting on the veranda enjoying their after-dinner ragweed, large volumes of music broke loose in the adjacent bungalow.

"Some music," commented Smith, glancing thru the fireflies in the scenery beyond. "Who might the performer be?"

"It is my neighbor Green," answered Jones "And would you believe that he plays by ear alone?"

"I would not," was the prompt rejoinder of Smith. "I can easily imagine that he might make that much noise by using both hands and feet and an ax, but you can't make me believe that he does it by banging the side of his head on the keys."

◆

A Miserly Man.

"I understand Mr. Pinchpenny has been operated on for appendicitis," said Miss Cayenne.

"Yes, it is the first time any one was known to get anything out of him"

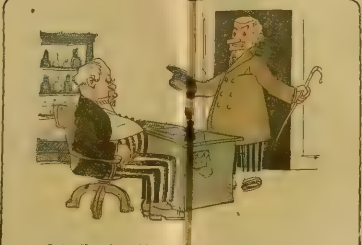
"And even then they had to chloroform him to get that"

◆

Some Consolation

Wife—"Everything we have here in the house is so old and shabby

Hub—"Have a little patience, my dear When they get a bit older they will be antiques."



Doctor—"I cured you of loss of me[illegible]y, didn't I?"

Jones—"You did!"

Doctor—"Then why don't you pay m[illegible]ll?"

Jones—"Why, after being cured, I [illegible]membered over two hundred other bills I owed—all antedating yours!"

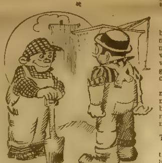
He Was Practicing.

A young preacher who was staying at a clergy house was in the habit of retiring to his room for an hour or more each day to practice pulpit oratory. At such times he filled the house with sounds of fervor and pathos and emptied it of almost everything else. A well-known bishop happened to be visiting a friend in this house one day when the budding orator was holding forth.

"Gracious me!" exclaimed the bishop, starting up in assumed terror, "pray what might that be?"

"Sit down, bishop," his friend replied. "That's only young D—— practicing what he preaches."

◆



Pat—"I'd like to get the 'iron cross,' Jerry."

Jerry—"Then you should marry. Just get your wife cross and you'll get the flat iron."

The [illegible]y.

The [illegible]otch minister [illegible]ose and clea[illegible] his throat, [illegible] remained [illegible]lent, whil[illegible] con-gregatio[illegible]wait-ed the se[illegible]on in puzzled [illegible]pect-ancy. [illegible] last he spoke[illegible]

"There'[illegible] lad-die awa' there in t[illegible] ga[illegible]y a-kissi[illegible]e. he sai[illegible]en he's d[illegible]'ll begin."

A Sub[illegible]te.

"[illegible] a bad [illegible] El-mer, [illegible] his moth[illegible] 'I'll wrap your [illegible]roat with flan[illegible] and give [illegible] me cough sir[illegible]'

"Would[illegible] flan-nel cake[illegible] and maple s[illegible] be bett[illegible] mam-ma[illegible] El-mer

The Wa[illegible] It.

[illegible] prove that [illegible]list's bills [illegible] litera[illegible]

"Ho[illegible] can that be?"

"Aren't they eye-deal [illegible]rit-ings?"

Slow to Reply.

An old man named Paddy Maloney was fishing with a line on the River Flesk. As the day was warm, Paddy was resting on the bridge, when he was accosted by a traveler:

"Hello, old man; how are the fish to-day?"

"Well, sir, I don't know; I dropped them a line and got no reply."

◆

The Anecdote.

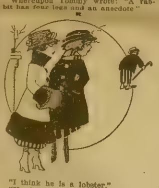
"What is an anecdote, Tommy?"

"A short, funny tale."

"Very well, write on the board a sentence containing the word."

Whereupon Tommy wrote: "A rabbit has four legs and an anecdote"

◆



"I think he is a lobster."

"He is such an insignificant thing that he isn't even that; he is a lobsterette."

Had Tried Hard

At a recent trial one of the witnesses was a green countryman, unused to the ways of the law, but quick, as it proved, to understand its principles. After a severe cross-examination the counsel for the prosecution paused, and then putting on a look of severity, exclaimed:

"Mr. Kilkins, has not an effort been made to induce you to tell a different story?"

"A different story from what I told, sir?"

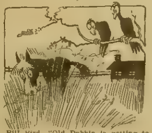
"That is what I mean"

"Yes, sir; several persons have tried to get me to tell a different story from what I have told, but they couldn't."

"Now, sir, upon your oath, I wish to know who those persons are."

"Well, I guess you've tried 'bout as hard as any of them."

◆



Bill Bird—"Old Dobbin is getting to be quite upper class."

Birdy Bird—"Explain!"

Bill Bird—"He's in with the high browse."

◆

An Old Saying.

Doyle was breaking stones on the roadside beneath one of the high hills in South Kilkenny. Eating the grass beside him was the ass that carried him to and from his work. The donkey was old, and as Doyle would say, "as cute as himself." One day an English tourist chanced to come the way, and the ass, seeing him approach, began to bray loud and long. The tourist, coming up to Doyle, asked:

"Why does that old ass bray at seeing me?"

"I don't know," said Doyle, "but there is an old sayin' in the place—'when friends meet hearts warm.'"

◆

Easily Explained.

Schmidt sued Jones for slander, alleging that Jones had called him a hippopotamus some six months before. Of this time item Jones' attorney made capital, saying scornfully:

"Why, you haven't got any case, Mr Schmidt. If your feelings were so badly hurt, why didn't you take action six months ago?"

"Yes, I know," answered Schmidt, easily, "but I never saw a hippopotamus until two weeks ago."

◆

The Borrower.

"I don't see any new books scattered around your library, old chap."

"No. I've been so busy lately I haven't had a chance to visit any of my friends."—Judge.

Such Is Life.

What, with his little brown waxed mustache and all, Ernest Stupors was a very hard catch, but at last Clementine felt that she had him safely landed Leaning back against his broad shoulder, on the parlor sofa, she unhooked a sigh of relief

"But, Clementine, are you sure, if I marry you, that your father will give us a house of our own?" he said hesitatingly

"Positive, Ernest

"And are you certain that he will provide us with money enough to live in the style to which I feel I ought to have been accustomed?"

"Absolutely, Ernest.'

"And he will take me into the firm and let me put my name first on the letter heads?"

"Ernest, he will."

"And allow me to give tango teas at the office in the afternoon?"

"Of course, Ernest."

He made as tho to kiss her, and then started to his feet.

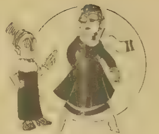
"Good-by forever!" he cried hoarsely. "Your father is too eager to get you off his hands."

◆

No Use Hiding.

The motor car shot down the hill at the speed of an express train and then overturned, pinning the driver beneath it. The village policeman approached pompously.

"It's no use your hiding under there," he said sternly to the half-smothered driver. "You were exceeding the speed limit and I must have your name and address."



Aunt Lucy—"In my time girls were trained to be more modest and reserved"

Maude—"In your day they had funny ideas as to [illegible]

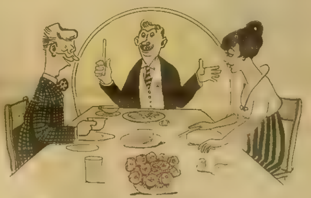
◆

Concerning Stock.

He had a lot of money, but no discoverable ancestors, and so it came that he affected contempt for pride of birth. And there was another man whose family tree was tall and umbrageous, but who possessed no other assets worth mentioning. A discussion between these two men was of profound interest. Each avoided hurting the other's feelings, but it was easy to detect an undercurrent of antagonism. They concluded

"Say what you will," asserted the one, "it is a fine thing to come of good stock."

"It is a finer thing," replied the other, with finality, "to own it."



[illegible]arder—"I have taken butter twice, what is that [illegible]

S[illegible] Boarder—"That you're not paying for the butter

The Size of Her Shoes.

An old colored woman was sitting with knees crossed in the shoe department of a large store when a young woman clerk stepped up to her.

"Auntie, what size of shoe do you wear?" she inquired.

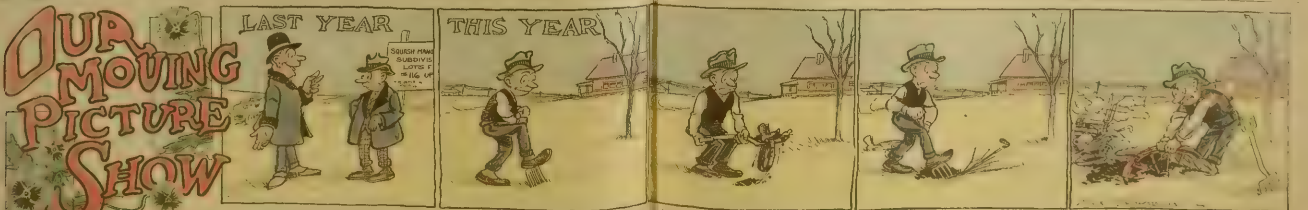
"Well, honey! I kin wear eights and I ginerally wear nines; but dese yer I's got on are twelve and de good Lord knows day hurt me"

Only His Life.

A "cub" reporter on a New York newspaper was sent to Paterson to write the story of the murder of a rich manufacturer by thieves. He spread himself on the details, and naively concluded his account with this sentence:

"Fortunately for the deceased, he had deposited all of his money in the bank the day before, so he lost practically nothing but his life."

IN THE SWEET SPRINGTIME



Real Estate Agent—"You will find this place a veritable Garden of Eden. Sinking a spade into this rich, deep soil will be a positive pleasure."

Mr. Victim—"What an ideal spot for my garden! It's a shame to desecrate this virgin soil with a spade. Looks like this soil had never been stirred since the days of Adam."

Humph! What in Sam Hill is this, anyway? [illegible]ow do ye s'pose that stuff ever got there? Well, [illegible] try another spot.

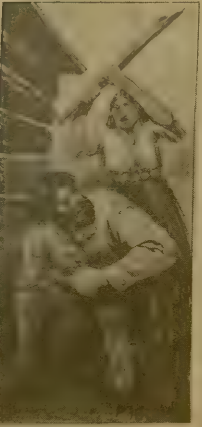
"Thunder and Mars! More infernal rubbish! Oh, yes, this is the deep, rich loam all right! Virgin soil nothin'!

"Well, may I be blowed! This musta' been [illegible] city rubbish dump! Sure thing, the Garden of Eden! Wait till I get my bread-hooks on that lying swindler!"

STRONG JACOB OF EDEN

Or, The Wilderness Waif

By William H. Manning



Unable to ward off the punishment.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE forest leaves rustled as they were parted by the progress of a slight figure, and the more timid creatures of the wild places moved quickly away, aware that tho beast killers of the woods often slew their kindred, the worst slayer in their domains was man. Yet there was now no need for alarm. The human wanderer was not only a woman, but she was Judith

Judith lived! It was thirty hours after the desperate occurrences on the bank of the Columbia, and she was still a creature of the flesh, tho not one composed or happy. Alone, and some miles north of the river, she passed among the trees as timid as the fleeing hares, and often looked back in terror of what might be there.

Alone, she had the dreadful company of fear, yet she welcomed black perils if they did not bring again that from which she had lately escaped. Before her was the unknown, but back in the tangle was worse.

She was about to sit briefly for needed rest when a dry stick cracked close at hand. Startled, she wheeled and saw a man. Strength deserted her, and a scream trembled on her lips, but second view thrust it back, and, instead, she cried out in joy. Jacob Lee was advancing toward her with long strides.

His expression had been that of great happiness, but he sobered as he noticed her visible exhaustion, her drawn face, and torn and mud-smeared clothing. It was not until later that she noticed he was in equally demoralized condition, an that, in addition, his head was bound in a bloodstained cloth

"Oh, Mr. Lee!" she cried, "thank Heaven you are here!"

"Judith, Judith! Poor child of the forest!" he exclaimed, in deep pity. "There, there! A friend is with you now. Subdue the flood of your emotions, for I will defend you. You are safe!"

"This is a happy hour for me!" she breathed tremulously.

"It is more than that for me. Child, you are worn out. Yonder is a log. Seat yourself and recover a measure of your strength."

"I fear to stop least an enemy comes."

"If such comes," said Jacob, with quiet firmness, "it will go hard with him. With so much to fight for I can fight well. Pray sit!"

The repeated invitation was not accepted until some minutes later, and after other words had been spoken, but he prevailed at last. She had grown calmer, and, feeling the necessity for practical speech, he wasted no more time.

"We will soon start for the mission, tho, having lately been there and finding it wholly deserted, I am not sure our friends will be so readily located. For now, Judith, pray tell your story. I last saw you when you were flung into the river from the canoe Thomas could not control. Tell me all!"

She shivered and seemed to shrink away, but rallied.

"You shall hear," she replied, "but I will speak very briefly for now. Yes, I was flung into the river, and the swift current carried me away from the bank. I was really drowning when I remembered that I could swim a little. I put forth my efforts, and the diagonal current aided me so well that I was again carried to land. It was the north side of the stream.

"I dragged myself ashore and crouched in the bushes, uncertain what I had best do. Sight of several Indians near me decided the question, and I rose and fled into the forest. I shall never know much about that wild race. I had lost all reasoning powers, and I ran on and on and on until I sank from total exhaustion. I was then miles away, I think, and, seeing that the place was very still, I abandoned all efforts and sank into unconsciousness, which probably was the sleep of utter fatigue.

"When I awoke the sun was low in the west. I thought anxiously, tried to decide where the mission lay, and walked on until night fell. After that I dared not move further, so, for long hours, I crouched in a thicket and shuddered with fear of many things. Toward morning I slept again.

"I came back to conscious life to find an Indian standing near, regarding me intently. It was one of Red Beaver's wild braves, and I found myself his captive. All my pleadings failed to move him to pity, and he announced his intention of keeping me permanently, but as time wore on he grew less arrogant and finally became communicative.

"Brother Jacob, I learned many things. Captain Gregory has been an evil power among us, a base knave, a plotter and a traitor to his own race. I am not sure I know all, but Sandy Murch was his man, his spy, and it was Gregory who urged the lower Sciorras on to violence.

"That brave who was killed in the glade by the mission was slain by Sandy, tho in mistake. Why the Indian was there I did not learn, but Sandy thought him some other man. It was dark, you remember. Red Beaver did not know the truth at first, but when he did he listened to Gregory and made the attack on the mission

"When my captor became so confidential I gained hopes of moving him to pity later, but we were interrupted by the appearance of a dreadful person. It was Heart-That-Is-Strong, the relentless chief in Red Beaver's band, the [illegible] of the young brave who was [illegible]

"Having come he said a few words to my captor and then, declaring that I should be his prisoner, ordered the younger man to leave. This led to a quarrel, and they fought and I fled from both, escaping by the kindness of Providence. Since then I have run and walked, trying to find my way back to the mission."

"Poor child!" Jacob commented. "Your sufferings have been great, but I hope they are now past. I will do my best for you."

"I do not doubt it, and my gratitude is deep. But your own adventures, Brother Jacob—what of them?"

The Tall Pine told the story quietly, and with strict brevity.

When, tightly bound of hands and more loosely tied at the legs, he sank in the river with the Indian in his grasp, it looked like a death plunge, but just when the end seemed nearest his hands were strangely freed, and, realizing the fact, he swam ashore. There, between the partial drowning and the beating that had preceded it, he lost consciousness. When he recovered he was wholly alone.

He found that the bonds on his wrists had been cleanly cut, and supposed that the Sciorra to whom he held had managed to draw a knife and slash at him, but that, by chance, the blow had missed his body and merely severed his bonds.

Recovery of consciousness brought realization of physical weakness and many pains, but he soon set out for the mission. Arriving there he found the place deserted, so, after getting food and some other necessities, he took to the forest, hoping to come upon Mark and Ben.

"I think," he concluded, "that my head was not right for a while, for I am certain I wandered in a half-circle. Where I went I do not know, but toward night I came upon a trail which, thru certain evidences, I decided was that of little Abigail, your Indian pupil. I followed it, but lost it toward night. Darkness found me exhausted, and I lay down and slept until morning, not waking once. When day came I started to find the mission again, and was thus engaged when I happened on you."

"We have been wonderfully preserved!" said Judith, gratefully.

"Truly, a benign Power has had us in its keeping," Jacob replied.

"Peace after violence—oh! Brother Jacob, I saw your wonderful fight on the river bank with those dreadful Indians——"

"Then you saw somebody else fight a great fight!" cried Jacob, his eyes kindling. "Stubbornly as I opposed them, I think I should have lost my life but for the help of Yellow Leaf, the resolute old squaw. She battled at my side, and was a creature of destruction to our foes. She is truly a wonderful woman for strength, courage and [illegible]"

He stopped short as a new sound was followed by Judith leaping to her feet. Some of her color faded away.

"Do you hear that?" she demanded.

"It seemed like the baying of a dog."

"Heart-That-Is-Strong had such an animal. Oh! that dreadful Indian has set the animal on my trail!"

Jacob stood for a moment in deep thought, and then became again the warrior.

"If the dog is coming it shall do no harm. I can dispose of it with my weapons, which are a knife and two pistols. I will meet it [illegible]"

He started, but abruptly paused.

"I shall go only a few yards away, but I want to leave one pistol with you. I have dried it since my plunge in the river, and it is charged with fresh ammunition. I had some in my room Take it! Ah! the dog bays again. Wait here for me!"

The [illegible] hastened away, and Judith was again alone She stood in anxiety and alarm, listening to hear the dog, or some other sound of disturbing nature. It suddenly occurred to her that perhaps Jacob would miss the brute and that she would be attacked. What could she do?

Then she remembered that she held the pistol and looked down at it. Its size was generous, and its powers for execution probably great. Before then she had discharged a like weapon, and she grew more confident. This [illegible] mate protector

[illegible] mind turned in a different direc-

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a new be [illegible]
[illegible] of all [illegible]
hat had and [illegible]
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PUBLISHER, LONE SCOUT,
509 North Dearborn Street, Chicago

tion as she saw that a name was branded on an ornamental plate of the pistol. She looked more closely and read without trouble.

"B. Clayes."

There was something familiar in the name, tho, at first, she could not tell wherein the familiarity lay. Recollection came, and she thrust her hand into her waist. It came out holding a paper, small, damp, and stained by her immersion in the Columbia, but still readable. The words marshaled themselves before her eyes.

"Five hundred dollars reward for the arrest of Barrington Clayes, alias John Pugh, for the murder of Absalom Randall. Said Clayes is about 40 years old, tall and heavily built, and of great muscular strength —"

She ceased to read, lost in troubled wonder. What was Jacob doing with a pistol marked B. Clayes?

Confused and worried, she was seeking for light on this question when new sounds close at hand led her to turn. Captain Gregory was there, but no friendly smile was on his face. Grim and scowling, he eyed her with hostility and motioned toward the back trail.

"You need not wait for Lee," he said coldly. "You are to go with me, and, as delay is dangerous, I'll add that you go whether you are willing or not. The day for polite fictions is past. Come!"

CHAPTER XVI.

A PLODDER of the wilderness, a walker where giant trees were supreme, a speck of life where man seldom trod, a ghost of the silent places. It was a forest of fir-trees, lofty, dark, and patriarchal. Beneath them the sun had not shone fully for years, for the thick, interlocking tops made this impossible and left only black vaults. A timid person might have shrunk from being there, and one given to superstition might have imagined that evil spirits haunted the gloomy way.

Idle fancies did not trouble the plodder of the woods, and her worries dealt with things more tangible than phantoms. She was old, bony, and but sparsely clad in garments wet with mud and tattered by recent hard usage. This was Yellow Leaf, sometime of the mission. She walked alone, yet she had a companion. Attached to her back by means of stout vines was a smaller, fairer Indian, a child in years. It was Abigail, adopted daughter of the mission.

Yellow Leaf was feeble, and the staff she used did not prevent occasional tottering. Only stubborn resolution kept her up. Abigail's head sagged wearily. She was near the end of her endurance. The squaw had taken her up as a last resort, and it was going hard with both. Food would have been a blessing, but it was lacking, and this, with hardship, had taxed them beyond their powers of resistance.

At her own request the woman had been left by Mark and Ben where they found her by the river bank, and she had made her way alone to the mission. The deserted place had no attraction, and, impressed with the idea that she might possibly find some of the missing members of Father Caleb's household, she had taken to the woods to hunt. After a long while she came upon the trail of a child and recognized Abigail's footprints, so she became a persistent follower of the little tracks.

When the Indian attack came, Abigail, whose nature was rendered less bold by mission training, had fled wildly and for a long time, soon becoming lost. At last the woman trailer came to her, but by that time both were exhausted, the natural endurance of Yellow Leaf being weakened by her hard usage at the hands of Sciorra hostiles.

The need for food became acute, and the mission was distant a long walk, so the squaw was heading for a different spot, a vicinity where, she well knew, fowls could be shared easily.

At last there was a change in the outlying ground. The way dipped, and the sky-piercing firs gave place to humble willows and other deciduous trees. A swamp lay beyond. Yellow Leaf paused and eyed it closely, knowing that the ground beyond was impassable except at a certain spot.

Mission-softened Abigail began to whimper, and the woman moved again. She wanted to find a log formerly used for crossing, and soon identified the exact place, but the log was gone.

Setting the child upon her feet she searched, found a substitute, laboriously carried it and cast it into position, thus bridging a space where mud lay soft and treacherous, waiting to engulf whoever rashly stepped upon it.

Again picking the child up, she crossed and drew the log after her, so that it would not serve any intruder who might come. Next she passed over a swampy way with great care, for it was dangerously treacherous, went a hundred yards, and arrived at dry, rising earth, firm footing, and a sparse growth of firs.

She was on a knoll of about three acres, a place like an island in the swamp, and commonly called the "cut-off." Little frequented, it was known to a few as an area agreeable enough if one did not become trapped by the surrounding swamp.

The absence of the usual log had awakened some suspicion in Yellow Leaf's mind, and, using her eyes sharply, she trod softly and went with caution. Before relaxing her vigilance she intended to see the whole of the "island," and was thus engaged when she scared up a flock of fowls. One, less lucky than its mates, was caught in a tangle of brush, and the squaw pounced upon it before it could escape. Food had been provided, and strangely.

Aware that, a few months before, a hut had stood near, Yellow Leaf started to learn if it still existed. It was there, silent and time-scarred, but not repulsive. This the woman discovered after halting for survey, but when she was about to go closer she suddenly paused, looked long and hard at a point near her feet, hesitated, gazed in all directions.

Then, poising her staff for a club, she crept toward the door. Her Indian blood showed strongly now, and a warrior could not have been more alert, cautious, and skillful. She reached the entrance and peered inside. The hut was occupied.

Long she stood and looked, partly baffled by dim light, but surprise quickly crowded all other feelings back. She hastened inside. Abigail trembled and whimpered, but she was ignored. Yellow Leaf was looking at a woman, young and white, and the squaw's black eyes were like points of fire. Then she thrilled as she made full recognition of the white girl.

"I am afraid!" whispered Abigail "Let us go away."

"Hush!" Yellow Leaf quickly replied. "We cannot go from where the Great Spirit has sent us. Child, this is Sister Eve!"

The speaker, who had often done the rough work in the hospital room, made no mistake. Sister Eve was there, recumbent, fever-flushed, haggard, her eyes closed and her whole appearance pitiable. The Indian woman at once realized that she was in desperate condition, and when she had unavailingly tried to arouse her with word and touch she acted quickly. Unless attention was soon given to her it would be too late to save the fluttering spark of life.

Seeing a little vessel of bark by the wall she hurried outside, filled it at a neighboring spring of water, and, as Sister Eve acted with machine-like readiness, managed to administer a quantity of the life-nourishing fluid.

Only a part of the necessary work had been done. Yellow Leaf ran outside, went a few rods, and began to dig in the earth. In a few minutes she had uncovered a secret cache. She had been one of those to fill it, months before, when trouble among her people threatened, and now, when she had sight of various rude implements for cooking, she saw with relief that they had not gathered rust.

Next, she started a fire by rubbing sticks together, and presently had the fowl boiling. She had learned to make broth in the white woman's way, and this was her present task.

When it was cooked, she and Abigail ate ravenously of the solid portions, and, as the liquid cooled, she managed to give the vitally required nourishment to the sick girl.

Abigail promptly fell asleep, but her elder stood over the patient and studied her critically. The woman read the past well. When Sister Eve had last been stolen she had, of course, been brought to the remote, unfrequented cut-off and left to die. Deserted, she had lain without care of any sort, and such care and medicines were imperatively needed if the waning spark of life was to be maintained.

All strength was now gone, and, as Yellow Leaf decided, the one thing necessary was to nourish what vitality remained. Unless it was done the waif would inevitably die. The crisis was near

The Indian was sinking with her own physical exhaustion and wounds, but she went out, gathered a quantity of roots and herbs, and thus equipped with the curative articles designed by nature for mankind, she placed them brewing.

While this was being done she went out yet again and became a trailer. Finding the footprints of those who had brought the girl to the cut-off she found they had worn moccasins, but that all had toed out radically.

"White men who tried to pass themselves off for Indians!" she muttered

She wondered who they were. Her opinion of Captain Gregory was definite, but she knew that neither he nor Sandy Murch had been with the party. Who, then, had been the active kidnapers? Her wise old brain took heed of the fact that Gregory had recently had voyageurs with him, and she nodded sharply. She did not believe they had gone to the mouth of the Columbia.

When the herbs were ready she managed to get the strained liquid into her patient's stomach, and another step was taken in the battle to save the girl who had twice been left to die alone.

For the first time Yellow Leaf was at liberty, and she sat down with her back against the wall of the hut. It was in her mind to remain watchful, but even her stubborn resolution had its limits—sitting, she promptly fell asleep. Resting, she was surrounded by the visible signs of her good works, and, with them there, she was the angel of the swamp. She had earned the title by her courage, constancy, and devotion.

She was aroused by the mutterings of her patient. Sister Eve was beset with her malady, and she talked erratically of traps, canoes, traverses, portages, lodges, and brigades, but Yellow Leaf saw no cause to be discouraged.

She administered more broth and more medicine, and by the time the sun dipped behind the western horizon she saw faint signs of improvement. Nurse and child alike moved soft-footed, for a

(Continued on Page 17.)

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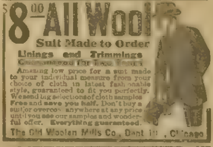

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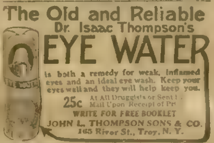

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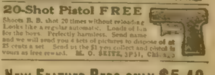

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Strong Jacob of Eden.

Continued From Page 15.)

sleep was upon Sister Eve that promised a good deal.

Twenty-four hours longer the fight was maintained, and then the nurse began to feel at ease. She knew her brew was having good results, while use of the broth was giving strength so needful at that stage of affairs. For the first time she was indulging in a little confidence.

Darkness again fell. Quiet was on the cut-off, and it seemed to be a world left to itself, a spot to which nobody came, or could come, except the three already there. Yet, the isolated calm was to be proved delusive.

Midnight came and passed. Other hours marched along, and the first rays of day dropped among the more detached trees. Something more than light was then astir.

A creeping shape, a squat figure, a forest of red hair and beard, a flat nose, and small, evil eyes, a man gnarled and sinister, ugly and repulsive, a creature that crawled snakelike and stared ahead wolfishly. It was Sandy Murch on a tour of investigation. When the hut was fully before him he paused and stared hard.

"Hate to go there!" he muttered, "but Gregory's orders has to be obeyed. She must have died long before this, and as for ghosts—well, they do say sech things be, but I've never seen none. Got to look, anyhow, and then use the spade an' get her out o' sight. Brace up, Sandy, lad, for she must have died long 'fore this. I'll see!"

Once more he crawled forward, making his way to the rear of the little structure. Reaching that point, he drew his knife and chipped away at the time-weakened wood. Presently he had an opening large enough for his purpose, and he applied his eye and looked inside.

He saw Sister Eve, not lifeless, but open-eyed and seeming to be in better health than when she was stolen from the mission.

Dismay fell upon him. By every law of nature, he thought, she should be dead, and her preservation scared him as much as the ghost he had mentioned could have done. Alive! How was it possible? He did not know, for he was not in position to see anybody else, and did not suspect that little Abigail was also in the hut.

Fear had him in its grasp for a while, but his courage flowed back, and, with it came ill-considered haste and ugly determination. He drew his pistol, thrust it thru the opening, and was about to pull the trigger. But Sandy fired no shot at Sister Eve then.

Just when he seemed master of the situation a rending pain flashed to his head and the world appeared to crack open. Sandy fell, beaten down by a heavy blow. He sprawled, helpless, while again and again he was struck and his brute head fared ill. Unable to ward off the punishment he managed to look. He saw a descending club, and back of it were the implacable face and fierce eyes of Yellow Leaf.

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Lost a Patient.

Little Bobby's father was a doctor and Bobby liked nothing better than to take his father's case in one hand, his overcoat in the other and go down the street for a block or two to some imaginary patient. One winter's day, when he started out he forgot to close the door.

"Bobby," called mother's voice sweetly, "please close the door." But Bobby was in a hurry and went on.

"Robert," came father's sterner voice, "close that door."

Bobby returned and closed the door. Some time later he came in quietly, put up the case and overcoat and started upstairs.

"Bobby," said mother ingratiatingly, "how's your patient?"

"Dead," was the laconic answer. "Gone dead while I was shutting that old door."

* * *

Hardly the Thing.

"Why did she break the engagement?"

"Seems he mailed her a love letter in one of those envelopes with a glass front."

TRAGIC TALE.

Lying one day 'neath my flivver,
Flat on my back in the road
I tried to tinker it up so
I wouldn't have to be towed

All things [illegible] save one cotter
Vainly I fingered and thumbed,
And every moment kept growing
More sweated, gritted and gummed

Nobly I stifled my feelings,
Feigning the thing was a play,
Setting my teeth on my patience
So it might not get away

Fifty-nine times that same cotter
Slipped and fell out on my face,
Fifty-nine times I returned it
Patiently back to its place

Sixty—and still it continued,
In me a hurricane brewed.
Sixty, and up—how much longer
Could the wild storm be subdued?

Seventy! Then I exploded,
Ripped out a sulphurous word.
Up at the blast went my flivver,
Up and away, like a bird!

Never since then have I seen it.
Don't care to see it—the day
It strikes the earth it will be just
One complete wreck, anyway

* * *

SPRING MORE OR LESS.

"I have been shopping," Mrs. Wilkinson told her husband at dinner. "And I am cross with all my friends."

"What have friends to do with shopping?" Wilkinson asked with interest. "I thought that when you women plunged into shopping you forgot friends and everything else in the mad joy."

"That is the way it is usually misrepresented," sighed Mrs. Wilkinson. "As a matter of fact, shopping is hard work. It isn't that which bothers me, however, but the wild excitement that people fall into every year at this time merely because spring has come. You know, I didn't get out yesterday on account of the reading circle's meeting here, but I enjoyed looking at the sunshine after all the dark days we have had. Almost everybody at the meeting had on a straw hat, so I spent last evening, while you were out, fixing up the new tall straw shape I got last week. I was going to take it to the milliner's, but I happened to have some trimmings and wanted to wear it today."

"What would you think of us men," asked Wilkinson, "if we put them on this early?"

"Well, everybody insisted that it was so lovely and springlike," Mrs. Wilkinson explained. "This morning the grocery boy said he was most roasted, tho he did acknowledge, I remember, that there was a wind. Then, when the laundryman came, I asked whether it was a spring day and he said it sure was. I got out my spring suit and put away my furs and started off. I had to wait a good while for a car."

"You are always having unusual experiences," offered Wilkinson.

"Don't make fun of me! The wind was pretty strong on the corner, so I went into the drug store to wait. It was so warm in there that I sneezed when I came out and the woman standing next to me said they ought not to have the stores so hot. They were cold enough downtown, and I got so chilled from all the open windows and ventilators and things that I positively shivered. Everything exhibited was for summer and the thin lawns and sheer waists made me cold, just looking at them. So I went upstairs and got some piping hot bouillon in the tearoom."

"Driven to drink, eh?" asked Wilkinson.

"So to speak," acknowledged Mrs. Wilkinson. "Everybody I met began the greetings with the remark that it was such a lovely spring day. A few of them even talked about getting ready to leave for the country in a very short time. I got colder and colder and some of the very people who talked about its being such a balmy day had the reddest noses and were shivering."

"They were no relation, probably, to the illustrious G. Washington."

"They seemed very sincere," Mrs. Wilkinson protested. "Old Mrs. Winthrop was quite certain that it was one of the nicest spring days she had seen since she was a young girl. You can't well accuse her of fibbing!

"It is just a fad to begin to talk that way at this time of year, even if the very people who indulge in the conversational extravagance are burning two tons of coal a week and wearing fur-lined coats.

"Eventually I reached a frame of mind in which I wagered to myself concerning what the first words of a woman would be as I saw her coming toward me. And I was right every time!

"At first I was very honest about my ideas of the weather and said no, I didn't think it was much like spring with such a cold wind, but after a while I thought there was no sense in having them look at me as if they thought I was crazy. One woman asked me whether I felt really well and another insisted that tho the air was disagreeable the day was a real spring one. Finally I began to wonder what was the matter with me that I couldn't see the point and admire the spring. And so after that I let them all think that I agreed with them."

"A cowardly proceeding! I certainly am surprised!" teased Wilkinson.

"You'd do the same thing yourself!" Mrs. Wilkinson retorted. "I believe in safety first and I was afraid they would telephone you to come and get me or else to the detention hospital if I persisted in disputing them. After a while it made me so nervous that I started for home, altho I hadn't half finished my errands. Of course every single ventilator in the car was open wide and the conductor kept the back door open constantly. As a result there was a wild wind blowing down the back of my neck and my feet were as cold as ice. The sky had clouded over, so, tho there were plenty of seats in the car, there wasn't a single sunny one that I could move to. People seemed able to endure it, however, tho one man did sneeze, and I got home fully persuaded that I was abnormal in some way. It all worried me seriously till I met the janitor in the hall. He spoke about the queer weather and informed me that it had snowed quite hard during the afternoon."

"We'll have to tip that man!" volunteered Wilkinson.

"He nearly had me falling on his neck with joy and relief," Mrs. Wilkinson chuckled. "By the way, dear, when you go out to get your cigar this evening will you bring me home some quinine and rock candy?"

* * *

His Future.

A lumber buyer was staying over night in a little farmhouse in the backwoods of northern Georgia. The man of the house did nothing but sit by the fire and chew tobacco. The lumberman had told how he had held his job for seven years.

"You've got me beat," said the old cracker. "I've only held mine for six years."

"What is your job?" asked the lumberman.

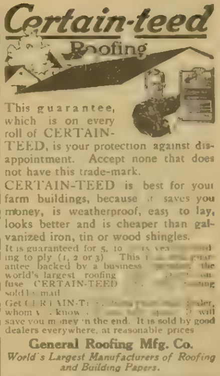
"Oh, I sit by de fire and watch dat de kids don't fall in."

"What do you do in the summer?" he asked.

"I sit by de well and pull de kids out when dey falls in."

"What will you do when the children grow up and don't need watching?" he asked.

"Den I s'pose I'se goner take things easy and retire," he said.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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second class matter June [illegible] 1885, [illegible] act [illegible]

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

Silence makes a bluff that's hard to call.

The unfairness of the fair sex is proverbial.

Cupid never attends the funeral when love dies.

Many a physically tall man is financially short.

Luck must be feminine because it is so uncertain.

Of course you mean well, but that is a poor excuse.

Poverty is no crime—otherwise most of us would be in jail.

Water on the brain isn't the result of a thirst for knowledge.

No man with a poor memory has any business to become a liar.

It is easiest to arbitrate after you have licked your opponent.

A lot of people speed up only when they are on the wrong track.

A woman can keep a secret all right if it is a good joke on herself.

Some people wear glasses because they can't believe their own eyes.

Every married man has a mind of his own, but the title is seldom perfect.

A man without ambition is like a pan of dough without any yeast to raise it.

And some men never realize how mean they have been until they run for office.

When a women says she looks like a fright she expects the man to contradict her.

And some men are so hard to please that they are not even satisfied with themselves.

It is not at all difficult for a man to have the patience of Job—if the boils are on his neighbor.

Women will never be paid as much for lecturing as men, because they do too much of it for nothing.

It is a fortunate thing that society is so shallow; otherwise half the people who are in it would be drowned.

If we should use an ax on our own faults we shouldn't have so much time to use a hammer on other people's.

Some people act as tho they were afraid they might forget their troubles if they didn't talk about them all the time.

No doubt the wise old hen chuckles to herself every time she sees a man trying to beat her little game with an incubator.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

The sailor hat will be as modish next summer as in past seasons.

Voiles continue to be more important among sheer white goods.

White flannel forms separate skirts for sports wear on cool mornings.

The Cossack influence shows in many of the new coats for girls and children.

Green is among the best colors to choose for morning suits in the country.

Polo sweaters are the latest sporting garment; they are fashioned without sleeves and have no collars. Ball buttons furnish the fastening and smocking holds in the fullness at the waist.

There are plain silk petticoats to wear with walking frocks that are plain petticoats, no more, no less. They are made with ruffles to give the required fullness at the bottom, and some of them are stiffened with crinoline or a reed.

Every woman who can possibly afford it will invest in one of the attractive suits of pongee, poplin, or silk homespun. They are a delightful combination of style and utility, and, tho rather high priced, are well worth the cost. They are to be had in white, cream, and oyster white; tan, brown and biscuit, Dutch, navy and gray blue, besides different tones of green and gray.

❦

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

A pin holder for the traveler which takes up absolutely no space is most simply made from two strips of cardboard about an inch wide and eight inches long. They are covered with narrow ribbon slightly wider than an inch, padded the least bit with cotton and whipped together. Short pins can be thrust around the long edges and hat and veil pins thru the length of the cushion. Threaded needles may be stuck thru one side, and the thread wound shuttle fashion around them.

Do you wish to introduce a delicate touch of color on your luncheon table? If so, embroider on a luncheon set a wreath of orchids, using the various shades of the flower in the embroidering. To make the design more effective outline the flowers, leaves, and stems in black. The touch of black is an important note in the embroidery world and is not to be overlooked. Finish the edges of the centerpiece and doilies with outline stitches done with heavy floss, and add a narrow edging of lace.

❦

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

The task of keeping the stove clean will be greatly lightened if all grease spots are rubbed off with a newspaper while the range is still hot.

Do not open a wet umbrella to dry it. Wipe it down with an old soft silk handkerchief and leave it to drain in a bath or basin, shut up.

To avoid having corks break in the bottle when removing them, drive a wire nail thru the cork from the bottom end, using a small washer between the cork and nail head to keep the nail from pulling thru. Bend the projecting end into the shape of a handle. This will be found very convenient for bluing bottle, vinegar jug, etc.

Large envelopes of heavy Manila paper, which fasten with a cord, are a great convenience to have in the house. They serve as a quick wrapper for parcels to be carried in the street, as well as packages to be put away in drawers or cupboards. It is surprising how much one of these will hold. They are particularly good to lay aside "cut out" sewing, for they keep all the pieces securely together and separated from other work. They can be labeled by a pencil memorandum, so that their contents can be told without examination

❦

RECIPES.

FISH FRITTERS—Cut some [illegible] slices of bread and spread them with a quarter of a pound of cooked fish (any kind) which has been pounded up with a little anchovy sauce and pepper and a tiny knob of butter. Place two slices together. Lay them all in a dish, pour over an egg beaten up with a little milk and well seasoned. Soak all night and when required fry a nice brown in hot fat, pile up on a hot dish and serve at once.

DRAWN BUTTER SAUCE—One-half cup butter, rubbed well with two tablespoonfuls of flour, put into a saucepan with one pint of boiling water, stir constantly until well melted. Throw in a sprig of parsley and serve at once.

BAKED CHICKEN—Select a plump fowl, dress it, and put it into cold salt water for one and one-half hours. Then put it into a pan, stuff and sprinkle well with salt and pepper. Lay a few slices of fat pork on the chicken. Cover and bake until it is tender. Have a steady fire and baste the fowl often, turning it at intervals.

CHICKEN EN CASSEROLE—Clean and wipe a plump young chicken, rub it with butter and dredge with flour. Put one-fourth cup of butter in a frying pan, add one sliced onion, one sliced carrot, a bay leaf and a sprig of parsley; cook until slightly browned and put them with the chicken into the casserole. Add a pint of well-seasoned stock, cover, bake for about three-quarters of an hour, then add two dozen small potato balls and two dozen mushrooms. Season with pepper and salt and cook until done, leaving the casserole uncovered so that the chicken will be brown.

EGG SALAD—Boil half a dozen eggs hard and leave till cold, then shell them and cut into halves lengthwise, and dust a small quantity of salt, pepper and cayenne over each half of egg and pour over it a few drops of oil and vinegar. Take small quantities and chop together of chevril, chives and tarragon leaves, place them in the center of the dish and arrange the halves of the eggs around this. Wash, drain and chop a few lettuce leaves, place them around the eggs, chill the whole and serve.

❦

CULTIVATE A SMILE.

Cultivate your smiles unceasingly, girls. This does not mean that you must sit in street cars wearing an insipid grin. Not at all! It does not even mean that you must actually smile in the literal sense of the word. But your expression can be smiling without your lips being parted at all. If you are thinking about pleasant occurrences your mouth will turn up at the corners and your eyes will sparkle, quite naturally and without any effort.

This will keep your face attractive and youthful, even when you have passed the borders of youth itself. If you wish to retain your beauty as long as possible, don't form the habit of letting your lips droop and all your face muscles sag downward when your face is in repose.

Just stand before the mirror and pull your lines down to get the effect. Draw your mouth down and scowl a bit and you will see just how ugly those drooping lines can make you look. Then smile, not artificially but naturally, just a little around the lips, but a great deal in the eyes, and you will see how pretty you can appear.

If every woman realized how much harm she is doing to herself when she sits with her face muscles all relaxed and drooping she would try the smile cure for ugly lines. The smile can bring about magical results in lifting a girl from the ranks of plainness to the heights of actual beauty.

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KEEP FISHIN'.

Hi Somers was the durndest cuss
  Fer catchin' fish—he sure was great'
He never used to make no fuss
  About the kind of pole er bait,
Er weather, neither, he'd jest say.
"I got to ketch a mess today."
  An' toward the creek you'd [illegible] him slide,
  A-whistlin' soft an' walkin' wide
I says one day to Hi, [illegible]
"How do you alw[illegible] Hi.
  He gave his bait [illegible]
  An' chucklin', says, "I jest keep fishin

Hi took to readin' law at night;
  And pretty soon, the first we knowed,
He had a lawsuit, won his fight,
  An' was a lawyer! I'll be blowed'
He knowed more law than Squire McNab'
An' tho he had no "gift of gab
  To brag about, somehow he made
  A sober sort of talk that played
The mischief with the other side
One day, when some one asked if Hi'd
  Explain how he got in condishin,
  He laughed an' said, "I jest kept fishin'

Well, Hi is Gov'ner Som[illegible]
  A big man 'round the [illegible]
To me the same old Hi, [illegible]
  The same old champeen fi[illegible]
It wan't so much the bait er p[illegible]
It wan't so much the fishin' ho[illegible]
  [illegible]t won for Hi his big succ[illegible]
  [illegible] jest his fishin' [illegible]
A cheerful, stiddy, hop[illegible]
Of keepin' [illegible]
  And that is why I ca[illegible]
  That more of us would [illegible]t keep fishin

* * *

THE WEDDING OUTFIT.

Miss Belinda had a letter from Farmer John Hoardly, her neighbor when she is living in her summer cottage.

"It has seemed real lonesome round your place all winter with you and your brother away," he wrote. "Jim Wendell didn't make a very good job of covering some of your roses. He's awful shiftless and he ain't any one you ought to trust to when you go away. He's like his father, who was so lazy and slack he'd rather live at the county house than work. Well, I took some straw down and threw it over them roses by the stone wall. You can pay me for it when you come back in the spring unless you'd rather put it with the check I'm sending with this letter and get a little something extra for Milly.

"Of course, you must have suspicioned how things were going with Milly and my hired man, Jake, before you left. I' seen it last summer, but I didn't say a word to hinder. Thinks I to myself, if Milly marries Jake—and she's sure to marry somebody, for girls with bright eyes and red cheeks like hers find it pretty hard to escape matrimony round here she'll stay home on the farm and that's a great advantage to me, seeing that she ain't got any mother

"Well, Milly and Jake's going to be married soon. So, Miss Belinda, I'm sending you $45 to buy a tasty outfit for Milly. It seems a lot of money to spend all at once on clothes and finery, but Milly's the only girl I've got and I want her to begin her married life fixed up as nice as anybody—not gaudy, but pretty and neat. And I got a good price for my crop this season, so I feel that I can afford to be liberal.

"I know you can tell better than I can just what she'll need, but there's one thing she must have certain—that's a good black silk. Her mother used to say that every woman ought to have black silk to wear to weddings and funerals and family gatherings. So get a good one that will last. I don't like black for Milly very much myself, but I want her to have what's right. I'd like it, too, if you could get her one of them soft light gray, cloudy dresses like you wore in the summer. I always admired to see you in that.

"Of course, you'll have to buy white stuff for the wedding dress. I was hinting around last night, trying to find out what Milly wanted for getting married in and she said she was thinking of a white dress that would be trimmed with lace and would wash. You see, I ain't told her I was going to get you to do this shopping, because I want to give her a surprise.

"I think it would be a good idea if you'd get some of them white shoes and stockings like you wear in the summer. They ain't very practical, but they'd look real nice with the white dress and we don't have weddings every day on this old farm. Of course, I'll leave the cloak and bonnet to you to pick out, any color you think right.

"I hope this won't be too much of a chore for you. I know you're real good-natured, and it seems to me that it would be easier for you to go into the stores and buy things than it is for me to write you all about them. I ain't no hand to write letters, but I'd do most anything for Milly.

"They're talking about turnpiking the road down by the big marsh. The township won't put up much, but we're going to try to raise enough money to do a good job. Cash Gallman was round with the paper for me to sign my amount and I put you down for $5. I know you're awful set on having good roads. If you want to give more you can let me know.

"If you see any little fancy breastpin or necklace that you think would look good on Milly, you might get one to kind of finish up the outfit, and if there's any money left you can buy two pairs of lace curtains for the front room. She's set her heart on fixing up the old house some. It seems plenty good enough to me the way it is, but I don't want to refuse Milly anything just now."

"Bless his old heart!" said Miss Belinda as she laid down the letter. "I'll have to be a marvelous financier to stretch that $45 half as far as he expects it to go!"

"But, Belinda," said her brother Ben, who had listened to the reading of the letter, "you know he said you might add to his money the amount due him for the straw he put on your roses!"

* * *

WARNED OFF.

"You luscious thing!" cried the girl in seal brown, tossing a muff composed of ostrich feathers, chiffon and three different kinds of fur on the pink counterpane and running up to her friend "What a sweet negligee!"

"Oh, Pauline, I'm so glad you have come," replied her friend. "Yes, isn't it? It's from that place in Paris. Now, you shall tell me which frock to wear this afternoon to Mrs. Levy-Browne's tea."

"That's easy; wear your mahogany velvet suit, of course, dear. But who is to be there?" asked the wily Pauline.

"Oh, lots of people," fenced the other girl, coiling one strand of glistening hair around a huge jeweled pin. Then, with a sudden burst of candor, she added, "In particular, Mr. Weller."

"Oh! He's the man who is going to marry Mrs. Levy-Browne's ward when she gets out of the schoolroom—if she will have him," her friend identified him. "So romantic, don't you think."

Her hostess put on vanishing cream savagely for a moment. Then she wheeled on her visitor, half in fun and half in genuine wrath. "No, I don't," she said.

"That's always the way," lamented the hostess a moment later. "No sooner do I begin to take a little feeble, hesitating interest in an eligible man than some one pops up with the tale that he is madly in love with my dearest friend, or is promised to some angelic person somewhere, or is engaged to a widow whose one support he is about to become. Of course, I can't think of taking the bread out of any one's mouth, so I proceed to forget him—and six years later he marries some one quite different!"

"Well, he may not be going to marry that schoolgirl. I merely know that some one said—"

"It's the principle of the thing, not any particular instance," interrupted the other, loftily. "From my earliest infancy—well, nearly!—this thing has been going on. I was

"Oh, bring me the old gray broadcloth, Mary; it is too hot for the mahogany velvet today.

"When I was a sticky little tomboy in the seventh grade," returning to her story, "and developed a fondness for letting Johnny Stout buy me popcorn at recess some kind friend must needs ask me if I knew that Johnny Stout liked Lucy Binner better than all the other girls put together, but was too shy to invite her to the football game, and Lucy had cried all Saturday and Sunday because Johnny was so shy. That was my cue. Fond hearts reunited! Lucy was awfully pleased, I remember, until the new boy arrived, when she promptly shook Johnny. But by that time I had outgrown Johnny myself."

"Why did you pay any attention to the meddling friend or to that Lucy person?" rippled Pauline, the offender.

"Exactly; why do I?" agreed the girl, slipping on her rings. "But such people fool me every time. You always hate to think that the only way you can get on is by sticking some one in the back. Of course, if you didn't have any figure or complexion or anything like that, you might have come to it, but——

"Well, as I was saying, the next time was the winter I was in the South with Uncle Joe. He was a dear. I don't mean Uncle Joe. But it promptly developed that there was a girl back home to whom he had been engaged since the first year of high school, or something like that. He didn't tell me, and I certainly should never have guessed it from his actions, but somehow I was warned off the premises by somebody. Six months later the girl in the case married an aged millionaire. So runs the world away!"

She was interrupted by Pauline's jumping up, snatching her muff, and kissing her.

"You are a funny old dear!" cried Pauline from the door way. "Now, I must run. I haven't had a chance to tell you that I am due at Mrs. Levy-Browne's, too; I have to pour in the second half. Shall I look for you, then —in gray

The other gazed at her friend for a moment with plaintive eyes, and then turned to her own reflection in the mirror. Suddenly a spark leaped to her eyes and her color deepened.

"No; I have changed my mind after all," she said, distinctly; "I shall wear my mahogany velvet!"

* * *

Big Families.

"A big family is a fine thing when troubles come," said Mrs. Gosham to her husband. "When Mrs. Gigum got hurt all her children came back home and took charge of things, and that consoled Mr. Gigum very much. They were a mutual support to each each other."

"Big families have gone out of style, just the same," replied Gigum. "A big family has come to be a joke. It is funny to see a man walking down the street with his wife and two children nowadays, not to mention three. Four is a huge joke, and five is the height of absurdity. I don't know what you would call six!"

"Why, I don't see anything funny about a man walking down the street with a wife and six children."

"Then why do you laugh every time the Bazoots pass here?"

"Oh, well, who could help laughing at the Bazoots! They are all so swaybacked and so fat. It looks as if they had to lean back hard to support the weight in front. I always want to cut a slice off them in front and put it on the back of them to give them a better balanced appearance. And every boy looks like the pa and every girl looks like the ma, and they all walk alike! Who could help laughing?"

"There is your Uncle Tubber, too. What could be funnier than that bunch? There were forty children in his family, weren't there? Every time he and his wife went down the street people took them for a Sunday school picnic. The parents ran out of names and began calling them numbers. There was Eleven and Twelve——"

"No, you are mistaken! There were no numbers given to my Uncle Tubber's children! Nothing of the sort! 'Leaven' was short for Leavenworth. Nothing funny about that. A very nice name for a boy."

"Yes, and I remember that when a burglar got into your uncle's house one night he got his gun, but before he could use it he had to call out: 'Mary, Barbara, Fanny, Pendleton, Irma, Worthington, John, Throckmorton, Ebenezer, Anderson—look out! Papa's going to shoot!' And by that time the burglar was gone.

"However, that prevented bloodshed And, moreover, there was no occasion to shoot, anyway; for when the burglar heard the family enumerated in that fashion he probably decided that there was no chance for him where the population was no numerous."

"But to come down to dollars and cents, Mrs. Gosham, a big family costs a lot more than a small one."

"I don't know that it costs much more. You have five pairs of shoes that you have worn but once because they hurt your feet. If there were graded sizes of brothers in your family those shoes could be handed around until somebody got the benefit of them. There is economy there, surely."

"I give it up," said Gosham. "You are perfectly right. Good night."

* * *

Slow Starter.

The maid of all work in a Brooklyn household was recently taken to task by her mistress for oversleeping.

After due reflection the maid replied, "Well, mum, it's this way: I sleep very slow, and so it takes me a long while to git me night's rest."

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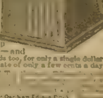

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Tex and Mex

Or, War Times in Mexico

By Augustin W. Breeden

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PART I.

THIS is the true story of how two ponies saved human lives in in war times.

My father's ranch was in the State of Chihuahua in the northern part of Old Mexico. We had built our shack in a beautiful little valley hemmed in by high mountains on two sides—a "canyon" they call such a valley in the Southwest—and we were really beginning to do well when the Madero Revolution broke out.

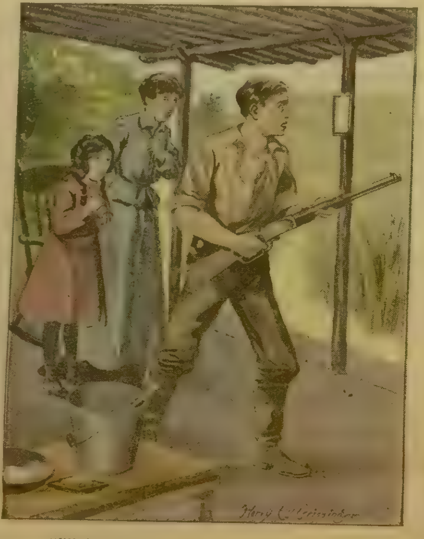
My mother was very much alarmed at first, and wanted father to move back into the United States till the war was over. But father argued that if we went we should lose all that we had gained by four years of hard toil; and besides, he said that the Maderistas were extremely friendly to citizens of the United States. And so we decided to stay on.

We had gone there for mother's health. She had been suffering from tuberculosis for years, and this was the one little spot in the great Southwest where she seemed to do best.

We had built a rock-and-concrete dam across the bottom of a dry arroyo, and irrigated our crops of milo maize and sorghum forage with the flood water which usually came down from time to time after the first of July or thereabouts. Then, besides, we had two wells with windmills on them to pump water for the cattle, and a "house well" with a pump operated by a small gasoline engine capable of irrigating four or five acres which we made to look like a perfect little oasis in the desert.

Our "shack," a three-roomed affair with screened verandas all around, was built of rock and concrete the same as the dam. It looked like a freakish city bungalow. We kept two large farm horses, which we had brought from the States with us, and two native ponies, which we named Tex and Mex, from the places the man we bought them from said they were raised. For the rest, our wealth consisted chiefly of about a hundred head of beef cattle and the beginning of a herd of angora goats. Poultry of all sorts we raised, chiefly to feed the coyotes, mother said.

There were only four of us in family—father and mother, and my sister Mamie, 12 years old, and myself. Sister and I—I never called her Mamie, but Sister—claimed the angora herd and also claimed Tex and Mex. We two and those two ponies were almost inseparable. Sister and I rounded up the cattle on the ponies whenever they tried to stray beyond our grassy canyon. We rode them on long journeys to neighboring ranches. We raced them, we fed them and cared for them, and loved them as if they had been human beings.



"I'll shoot the first dirty Mexican that shows up."

And Tex and Mex seemed to care as much for us as we for them. They seemed to understand everything we said to them, and they were better than any guide if we happened to get lost among those wide-stretching mesas and queer confusing canyons.

When the Madero Revolution had got well started, and Madero had taken Juarez, and later when he had made himself President of Mexico, and we had never been annoyed by his troops, we began to feel secure in spite of the war. Then suddenly there came a change in our part of the country. Pascual Orozco began to operate in the State of Chihuahua. He, as all the world knows, was a bandit and a friend to old Porfirio Diaz, whom Francisco Madero had supplanted.

We would have pulled up our pumps, loaded our plunder, and driven our cattle and goats across the desert and into the United States when he first began his outrages, but at that time of the year our herd contained many very young calves, and nothing was surer than that we should lose every one [illegible] them on the drive unless we waited until later in the summer, when the calves would be firmer on their [illegible] and the rains would have filled the water holes.

But that summer, the summer of 1912, was unpropitious. Very little r[illegible] fell, and the water holes mostly [illegible]mained dry. And meantime rovin[illegible] bands of outlaws, all friendly to the cutthroat Orozco, rode the range here and there, "rustling" horses and cattle wherever they could find them. "Red flaggers" they called themselves; they were mere robbers and murderers. We would have gone the last of July that year, rain or shine, but mother's trouble suddenly got worse, and we were afraid for her to try to make the trip till she should get better. We were obliged to stay on day after day, and week after week, waiting for her to get strong enough to make the tiresome trip.

Then suddenly the thing happened. It was early in September. The news came to us that Orozco had been forced to evacuate Juarez, and that he had fled before the Maderistas into the mountains and was headed our way.

We pulled up all the pumps but one and hid them securely; herded all the cattle and goats together; loaded a lot of provisions, a lot of water and bedding, and a camp stove into our big prairie schooner; and were all ready to start for the United States boundary about five day's driving away.

Then an hour before sunset my father mounted old Tex, and taking a field glass with him, started to a nearby mountain peak to look over the country and see if there were any roving bands in sight. Most of the country was a high flat table-land called "me[illegible] from this little peak, altho it [illegible] one could [illegible] a man [illegible] uld carr[illegible] [illegible] paration [illegible] great lar[illegible] nd me, and [illegible] looked upon [illegible] tates as a [illegible] As the sun [illegible] neared it [illegible] ood b[illegible] the door of the dea[illegible] [illegible] ther [illegible] another [illegible] that was [illegible] peak b[illegible] mount it [illegible] tood st[illegible] [illegible] end, not t[illegible] distance except by co[illegible] ison with the speed [illegible] ing up [illegible] coming back in a hurry!" I cried. Do you suppose it's the red flaggers?"

Mother shaded her [illegible] with her hands and tried to see. "I[illegible] coming back in such a [illegible] asked. "Perhaps he[illegible] as he wanted to and is just returning."

"He's moving mighty fast compared with the way he went up," said my little sister, turning pale and beginning to tremble.

When I saw my sister begin to tremble and saw my mother sitting there so pale and helpless, and thought of those dirty bandits perhaps coming to murder us all, I got furiously angry. I went into the house and got father's Winchester and began to fill the magazine with cartridges.

"I'll shoot the first dirty Mexican that shows up over the horizon!" I cried.

"No, you won't," said my mother, mildly. "That would just be inviting trouble. You must always remember, my son," she added after a moment's thought, "that the best part of courage is coolness."

A half-hour later my father dashed into the corral and came hurrying to the shack.

"There's a crowd of horsemen coming," he said, "but whether they're bandits or not I can't say. We'd better divide the herd so as to save at least half of it, and also hide Tex and Mex in one of those little box canyons so as to have them if they take our farm horses. Mother, you and Mamie go into the cellar and take some water and provisions with you. We may have to stand a siege; there is no telling."

Mother and Sister began to provision the cellar, which was about a hundred feet from the shack, and had been built for a sort of outwork as much as for anything else; and father and I divided the herd and prepared to drive the better half of the cattle as well as all the goats up the canyon.

When we had driven the cattle a good way up, we tied Tex and Mex in a little secluded box canyon, and saddling the farm horses which we had driven before us with the herd, made all haste back to the shack. We were none too soon. The Mexicans were there only about ten minutes after us. My father went out in the deep twilight to talk to them. He wore a big cartridge belt around his waist and a Colt revolver at his left groin, while my mother stood in the little cellar with our Winchester leveled thru a loophole at the man who stood nearest my father and seemed to be the spokesman of the crowd. I could hear every word that was passed, and I knew enough Mexican to understand it all.

They were followers of Pascual Orozco. They wanted cattle and horses. How many had he?

My father waved his hand toward the corral. "You can see for yourself," he said, speaking Mexican. "I gathered them all in this afternoon in order to

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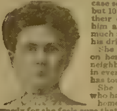
(We earnestly advise every one of our readers who wishes to cure a dear one of drunkenness to write to this lady today. Her offer is a [illegible] sincere one.)



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make a drive to the international boundary."

"Are these all?" asked the leader of the bandits.

I listened tensely. In all my life I had never known my father to tell a lie. He would not do so now—I felt he would not.

"No," he answered, after a long pause, "there are more on the range."

"How many more?"

"You'll have to find that out for yourself."

"You lying gringo!" cried the bandit, with an oath. "You speak to me right or I'll blow your brains out!"

My mother's posture stiffened. She leveled the Winchester carefully at the speaker's heart. I thought again of what she had said to me an hour before—that the better part of courage was coolness.

"I will give you all the cattle I have here in the corral and what money I've got, which isn't much," said my father, "on the condition that you will leave us alone and let us get out of the country with what is left."

"We accept no conditions!" cried the bandit. "We are the people that make conditions for others to accept."

In an instant a circle of dark figures closed around my father. It was done so quickly that my mother lost father in the hurly-burly and was afraid to shoot for fear of hitting him. He drew his pistol and fired one quick shot, wounding a cutthroat in the shoulder; then they clinched him and disarmed him. My mother ran forth from the cellar threatening them with death from her Wincehster if they harmed a hair of father's head. They laughed at her and jeered and shouted; but they took her at her word, and didn't try to do any man-handling. They told her she must give up her weapon or they would overpower us and murder us all? My mother waited for father's instructions.

"Come on, mother, and give up the Winchester," he said sadly. "There is no use to resist; we are too greatly outnumbered."

They made us four prisoners and kept us in that cellar all that night and until noon the next day, while they rounded up all our stock, ate everything they could lay hands on, and allowed their horses to trample down our garden. Then, either killing or taking with them every head of stock we had, every turkey, every duck, and every chicken, they went their dusty and boisterous way, leaving us to live or die as we might. We had hoped that they would not find Tex and Mex, but they did.

"Well, there's nothing we can do," said my mother, "but to sit down here and wait. We still have up one windmill, and our garden may keep us from starving."

"I'm going to walk over the mountains to Stevenson's ranch," said my father. "Perhaps I can secure a couple of ponies there, and then we can get out of this. It seems our only hope. All the ranches in the other direction are deserted; I saw that yesterday evening from the mountain. You all must barricade yourselves in the cellar every night, but do what you can to irrigate and cultivate the garden during the day. The windmill will irrigate at least an acre of it. I will be back in two days at the outside."

So saying my father wasted no time, but set out on foot across the scorching hot desert, and with just food and water enough for the round trip. We all wept to see him go, for none of us knew whether we would ever see him again. My father was indeed a brave man. He was now taking his life in his hands in crossing a stretch of hostile country entirely unarmed.

During the two days that he was gone Sister and I worked in the garden all the time it was light enough to see, irrigating and nursing what promised most immediate food. Those were the peacefullest, quietest days I ever remember. The desert seemed asleep and dreaming beneath the shimmering September sun.

The second day was Sunday, by the way, but we didn't stop work. But we had Sunday school with a song, a lesson, and prayer, while we were taking our short noonday rest.

I recall that I thought, while mother prayed, that this was 1912, and that all over the United States people were going home to dinner in peace and safety after attending Sunday school and listening to good sermons. I felt bitter to think that when everybody ought to be enjoying the fruits of peace and civilization, here we were in the desert under conditions as savage as those our forefathers had had to face a hundred years ago.

My mother prayed for father's safety and for our own; and then she prayed for the home folks back in the States, and for peace in Mexico and the success of those who were fighting for freedom. Her prayer brought the hot tears to my eyes, but they were tears of bitterness at our lot.

My father returned that night about midnight. He was completely worn out, and was nearly famished for food and water. He reported that there was no white person at the Stevenson ranch nor at any other ranch in that direction. He tried to hire some Mexicans to haul us to the boundary, but they refused. He had likewise had a brush with some bandits, who had cursed him and reviled him as a gringo and threatened to murder him.

There was indeed bitterness in my heart as I heard him wearily reciting all that he had been thru. I think there was bitterness in the hearts of all of us unless it was my mother's.

"Father," she said, in reply to a wish of his that he could blow up the whole revolutionary movement, "father, you should not rebel against it all. You have said yourself that the revolution in Mexico is going to bring good to the poor struggling lower classes. The people, some of them at least, are fighting for liberty, just as our forefathers fought during the Revolutionary War. It may be freedom according to their poor lights, but it's freedom from oppression they're fighting for. And if we are caught in this war and have to suffer, we are no worse off than many another family in many another war."

"Well, if no hope of deliverance shows up within the next few days," said my father, "I shall walk all the way to the U. S. border and demand that an escort be sent out to bring us back. But that will be a dangerous and uncertain undertaking. Meanwhile we'll keep our garden growing and trust in the Lord for safety. Surely no one will molest us now that we have nothing left that any one could possibly want. I wish those cutthroats had not found Tex and Mex. With them and our old spring wagon maybe we could have made a dash and got across the border."

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

WHY THE MAID LEFT.

"Say, Ma," said Pa Jenkins the other morning, "what do you say to us keeping a hired girl?"

"Now whatever made you think of that, Pa?" exclaimed Ma. "Not that I wouldn't mind for a change—it would be a rest, but for just us two——"

"Well, we'll get one," declared Pa, with a flourish of his knife, before he descended upon the ham and eggs. "I just hate to see you getting down so early these cold dark mornings to get a big breakfast for me. And we're getting old enough to be waited on—eh?"

"Yes, and everybody else in the neighborhood has a maid," supplemented Ma. "I know some of the ladies look down on me because I do my own work."

So the Jenkinses got a maid for the sum of $6 per, every other Sunday and Thursday out, and the washing done out. Oh, yes, her caps and aprons for waiting on the door and serving company were also to be furnished by her employer. She assured Ma that this was done in the best families, and that she had worked in none other.

After showing the "help" about the house and instructing her in her duties, Ma sat down in the big rocking chair, folded her hands, and sighed with content.

"Now," she thought, "I'll get some sewing done, and I can pay up the calls I owe, and I won't have to feel there's nobody to answer the door when I'm out. I do hope she's a good cook—Pa's so particular."

Ma resolutely kept away from the kitchen during the preparations for dinner. She had given her orders, and determined to let the maid show what she could do. Besides, she agreed with Pa that she'd been a slave to the cookstove long enough, and it was time for her to take a rest.

Well, the dinner was prettily served and the cooking was reasonably good. Nobody had any complaint to make. But neither Ma nor Pa acted natural. Pa began to tuck his napkin in his collar, then, catching the maid's eye, he carefully laid it over one knee, as is done in polite society. And thereafter he refrained from putting his elbows on the table, as he was wont to do in waiting for Ma to bring the next dish.

And Ma found herself opening her mouth and then shutting it hastily before she started to tell bits of the day's happenings, as was her custom—much to Pa's enjoyment. There was something lacking, something uncomfortable; about that evening meal, and they hurried thru it so the maid could get her work done—instead of dawdling as usual.

"Anyway," said Pa, afterward, as he sprawled in his easy chair, "you don't have to waste your time washing dishes now. Say, does she know she's got to get up early?"

"Yes, I put the alarm clock in her room and she's got it set all right," answered Ma. "I think she's real capable. We can sleep a little later now."

But Ma almost forgot and was turning out at the usual time next morning when Pa reminded her.

The breakfast was all right, except that Ma was yawny and kind of cross and Pa didn't spring any of his jokes. He was too busy eating his grape-fruit the right way. They hurried thru the meal again, and Pa couldn't spend his last moments in the kitchen with Ma as per custom, so he almost forgot to kiss her good-by as he hustled out the front door.

So it went for a full month. Then, one evening, Pa came home to a maidless house.

"Susie's day off?" he queried.

"Yes, for keeps," stated Ma with decision. "Pa, I just couldn't stand it any more. We couldn't either of us be natural, and we were afraid to say anything above a whisper for fear she'd hear, and we just couldn't be private and—and—Pa, I just did miss the cooking something awful. And it just seemed as if the meals couldn't agree with you if I didn't fix them myself. She's a pretty good cook, tho nothing fancy——"

"Nothing tasted right," declared Pa, "tho there wasn't anything I could really find fault with."

"That's just it," exclaimed Ma. "I just couldn't find fault with her, so it must 'a' been us. We just couldn't abide a strange party in our home all the time, and I was just lost without my regular work and—oh, Pa, you don't know how I missed getting up mornings and fixing your breakfast the way you liked it!"

"And I haven't dared to hug you like this for a month," quoth Pa, demonstrating. "It seemed too public."

* * *

His Excuse.

A few weeks ago a lady residing in a small town asked her husband, Major ——, to call in at the dairy when passing to order some new-laid eggs. After making a brief demur the Major yielded. A little later he called at the shop, quite a small and unimportant establishment in a back street.

Two or three minutes passed; then as no one came to attend him, the Major gave a gentle knock on the counter. This had no effect, so a smart double rap was given, when a curly-headed youngster put his head around the door and lisped out: "Father's a-comin'." By the time "father" arrived the Major was boiling with rage.

"What do you mean by keeping me here all this time?" he roared.

"I am very sorry, sir„ replied the man, "but, you see, it's like this. You're the very first well-dressed gent with a tall hat I've had in my shop, and as there were a lot of people passing I thought what a good advertisement you was a-standing there."

* * *

Undoubtedly Hurt.

The stone cutter was on the witness stand describing the way in which he had been assaulted by the defendant. "He walked right into my yard," the witness said, "and slammed me up against one of my own tombstones."

"Did he hurt you?" inquired the court.

"Hurt me! Why, I've got 'Sacred to the memory of' stamped all down my back."

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WHEN SHE'S AWAY.

I'm sittin' here, all by myself,
  A-doin' like I please;
If I jest want I'll cry some more,
  An' I don't keer who sees.
I got a lot to cry about—
  I guess that you'd cry, too—
I wisht my mother would come back;
  I wisht she would, I do!

She's been away the longest time;
  It seems almost a year,
O' course I know it ain't so long—
  It seems so, pretty near;
An' so I jest don't want to play
  The way I used to then
'Fore she went vis-tun—an' I wisht
  That she'd come home again!

I'll feel so good when she comes home
  I'll tell you what I'll do—
I'll let her dig my Sunday ears
  An' wash my stummick, too,
An' then I guess I'll hug her some
  As tight as I kin squeeze—
I'm cryin' while I'm sittin' here,
  An' I don't keer who sees!

❧

A FAIRY BRICK.

Once on a time there was a little girl that didn't want to grow up. She was having such a lovely time being just a little girl that she thought it would be perfectly horrid to grow up and have to wear long, trailing dresses that would get in her way when she wanted to do anything, and have to give up playing tag and hide and go seek, and do nothing but sit in the parlor and talk to her friends when they came to see her, and, every time a new birthday came around, instead of being glad she felt just like crying. At last one day when she saw her eighth birthday looming ahead—for the birthdays kept coming on in spite of her—she wrote a letter to her fairy godmother, who always sent her birthday gifts, and said:

"Dear fairy godmother, if you haven't bought my birthday present yet, I wish you would give me something to keep me from growing up. I don't want to grow up. I'd much rather grow down, if I can't stay where I am."

When the fairy godmother got the letter she shook her head gravely. "Oh, dear! Oh, me! oh, my!" she said. "It's a dreadful thing to be a fairy godmother. Your mortal godchildren are always wanting things that are not good for them. I suppose I shall have to give Jane what she wants. And she won't like it a bit."

Mother—"Don't use that word again!"
Jimmie—"But Shakespeare said it."
Mother—"Then you mustn't play with him any more!"

So she went to the cupboard and took out a fairy brick. "Put it on your head," she wrote to her godchild, "and it will not only keep you from growing, but it will make you grow down. And it will be invisible to every one but you."

How delighted Jane was when she opened the parcel on her birthday morning and found the brick inside! Without waiting a moment she put it on her head and danced all over the house, singing: "I don't have to grow up if I don't want to."

For a week or two she had a most beautiful time and nobody noticed any difference in her. But at the end of that time her mother got out her summer dresses and said:

"I'm afraid they'll need to be let down a great deal, but try them on and we'll see." Jane tried them on and they fitted her perfectly.

"That's funny," said Jane's mother; "I thought you'd grown a lot since last year." But when, after a few weeks, she found that instead of taking tucks out of Jane's dresses she had to put them in, she began to get really alarmed.

"My dear child," she began, "I don't know what is the matter with you. I shall have to take you to the doctor."

But the doctor could do nothing for her because, of course, he couldn't see the fairy brick that was on her head, and Jane kept getting smaller and smaller and younger and younger every day. By and by she got so young that she forgot how to read and forgot how to write and forgot how to spell. She forgot what it was that was making her grow smaller, and she didn't know enough to take the brick off her head. Nobody can tell what would have happened if it hadn't been for a little white kitten named Juliet. This kitten lived next door to the house where Jane lived, and one day when Jane had grown down to be about two, she thought she would like to have the kitten to play with. So she started out to get it and toddled down to the street and into the garden next door. There in the sun sat Juliet, washing her paws.

"Nice kitty!" said Jane, and she picked her up in her arms and started with her toward home. But just as she got to the gate she heard a loud "Wouf! wouf! wouf!" and down the street came prancing a big black dog. With a frightened mew the kitten scrambled out of Jane's arms and onto her shoulder. The dog came romping down the street with his ears flapping, his tongue hanging out of his mouth, and his tail erect. In a moment he spied the kitten and leaped into the air to catch it. Poor kitty climbed higher in her fright, and trying to scramble on Jane's head she knocked off the fairy brick. It fell, striking the dog with such force and suddenness that he grew into a puppy all at once, not gradually, as Jane had grown small. And Jane herself all at once shot up into her former height.

Next to Jane and the puppy the kitten was the most astonished one there. She caught hold of the end of a branch, scrambled up into the tipmost top of the tree, and wouldn't come down for two hours and a quarter.

The first thing that Jane did when she regained her rightful size again was to stoop down and take the brick off the puppy's head, for she was afraid that if he got any smaller he would simply go out. And then, leaving the puppy looking extremely amazed to find himself growing up again so suddenly, she walked off, carrying the brick carefully.

The first thing she did when she got home was to go to the kitchen and ask the cook for an empty starch box. In this, after wrapping it carefully in tissue paper, she put the fairy brick, and directing it to her fairy godmother she sent it off by the expressman, with a polite letter, saying:

"Dear fairy godmother, next birthday you can choose my birthday present for me," which pleased her fairy godmother exceedingly.

Jane's mother was surprised and delighted when she saw her coming home her natural size again. And Jane was so thankful when she thought that she might have gone out as the puppy nearly did that ever afterward she was willing to grow up in a sane and sensible fashion like any other little girl.

❧

LUCIFER.

"Oh, Mr. Danzig, we have a new pet!" exclaimed the girl behind the counter in a large notion store. Then turning to a small boy she said: "Emerson, bring Lucifer here!"

In a few minutes her little brother came proudly forth from the workroom, which was back of the salesroom, carrying a small baby alligator.

Mr. Danzig, who was an agent for jeweled combs, looked astonished at this latest addition to the family pets and remarked: "Miss Lou, you certainly have an odd collection now. Where did you get him?"

Emerson beamed and replied: "Uncle brought him from Florida last week, and Andrea del Sarto doesn't like him at all. I think he is jealous of Lucifer."

"Who is Andrea del Sarto?" asked Mr. Danzig, with interest.

"He is Alice's cat," explained Miss Lou. "She named him after the famous artist, Andrea del Sarto, because he was so beautiful and such a thief when he was a kitten. Now he has grown so large I don't think him a beauty any more. Our neighbors call him Jumbo because he weighs nearly sixteen pounds; he is the largest cat in the neighborhood."

"Andrea del Sarto," mused Mr. Danzig. "Oh, yes, I remember—he stole the money the King of France gave him to buy pictures in Italy and built a house for himself with it."

Emerson dimpled and said eagerly: "Oh, yes, Alice read about that. He called it 'the melancholy little house we built to be so gay.'"

"Does your sister read Browning to you children?" asked Mr. Danzig in amazement. "She is certainly making use of her education, even if she is running a notion store at present."

Just then the elder sister, Alice, appeared, gracious and beautiful, and behind her Ben Bolt, the "barefoot dog with cheek of tan," as Lou called him. After greeting Mr. Danzig and placing a table before him to display his sample combs, Alice sat down and began to order the goods.

Lucifer, the baby alligator, was crawling around on the floor, when in came Andrea del Sarto to help his mistress in her selection of combs.

"Andrea is the dearest creature—a real angel in fur!" exclaimed Alice, looking fondly at her pet.

At this moment Andrea spied the alligator, walked up to him, hissed at him and cuffed him soundly. Then he walked away as if he had done his duty.

"Andrea did not behave much like an angel in fur just now," said Emerson, indignantly. "Just wait till my Lucifer grows up; he will eat Andrea del Sarto alive."

I had no idea alligators were so tiny when they were young," remarked Mr. Danzig.

"Andrea cuffs poor, dear little Lucifer every time he goes near him," said Miss Lou, shaking her brown head at the unsociable creature, which had seated himself near the window, and was calmly washing his face.

It was a rainy Saturday and very few customers came in. The children admired the agent's gold-mounted pins and empire combs and gave their sister the benefit of their opinions about her buying.

Finally, just as Mr. Danzig was packing his combs in their leather cases it entered Andrea's cat mind that it was about time for him to cuff Lucifer again. But even a baby alligator may remember former insults, and this proved too much. His eyes flashed, and when Andrea turned to walk away, Lucifer scrambled after him, seized his tail, and clung to it desperately.

Andrea was a frightened cat. He started on a race around the store, over counters and sample cases, picture frames and perfumery bottles, with Lucifer clinging grimly to his tail. He chased over the bookkeeper's desk and upset a bottle of ink in his flight, much to the disgust of the young woman who presided over the books.

At last Mr. Danzig released the frightened cat. Lucifer was none the worse for his exciting experience, but with wide-open jaws breathed defiance to Andrea and all the rest of the world.

Andrea, a sadder and wiser cat, viewed the baby alligator with respect. He had made up his mind that as long as they both should live he would never tamper with Lucifer again.

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Ledger's Embroidery Corner

We call the attention of every woman to the beauty of the patterns displayed from week to week, and wish to impress upon each one the splendid quality of material that makes our offer a great bargain in every case. Every offer is complete. You can finish it up without buying anything extra.

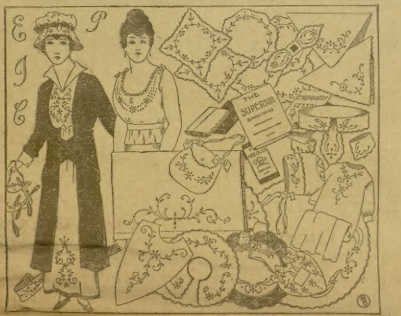
These designs are already stamped on the best quality cloth, and every set comes to you complete, exactly as described.

You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them. Any person can earn one or all of the designs shown by sending us the amount of subscriptions to either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade, required in the description under each article.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

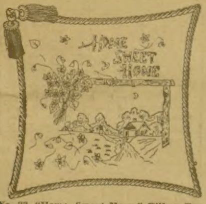
Either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade $1.00 a year each; 6 months for 50 cents.

The Blade and Ledger together $1.50 a year (52 issues); 6 months for 75 cents; 4 montns 50 cents.



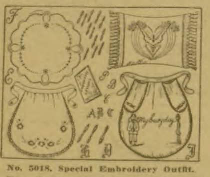
No. 521, Fancy Work Outfit.

NO. 521, FANCY WORK OUTFIT.—Did you ever in your extreme youth buy a jumbo bag? If you did you will remember that for one cent you received in a paper bag some popcorn and so many pieces of various kinds of candy that you wondered how in the world it could be sold so cheaply. This fancy work outfit will remind you of those days. It consists of 1 centerpiece and 6 doilies to match, stamped on fine white linene; 1 bone stiletto for punching holes for eyelet embroidery; 10 assorted embroidery needles; 3 skeins of embroidery cotton; 1 cake of Superior stamping preparation; 1 distributor; complete directions for transferring perforated patterns. The designs consist of corset covers, shirtwaist, collars and cuffs, baby cap, baby bib, calendars, complete alphabet and many others. Given for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger for $1.00.



No. 23, "Home, Sweet Home" Pillow Top.

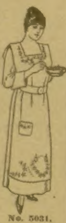
NO 23, "HOME, SWEET HOME" PILLOW TOP.—This pillow top is tinted in natural colors on ecru art cloth, size 21x21 inches. With it we include tan holland back and six skeins of colored floss. Given free with a $1.00 year's subscription, new or renewal, to the Blade or the Ledger.



No. 5018, Special Embroidery Outfit.

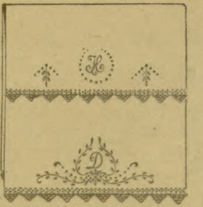
NO. 5018, SPECIAL EMBROIDERY OUTFIT.—This is one of the best bargains we have ever been able to secure for our subscribers. We hope all our subscribers will take advantage of the opportunity while the stock lasts. The outfit consists of the following: One pillow top, size 17x21 in. tinted on pure brown linen; one centerpiece, size 18x18 in., stamped on white art cloth; one apron, stamped on white lawn; one clothes pin apron, stamped on ecru art linene; twelve skeins of white cotton floss, for working out designs on tea apron and centerpiece; three skeins of colored floss, for outlining design on pillow top; four complete transfers, alphabets for marking lingerie, baby wear, table cloths and napkins; one 8-page illustrated embroidery booklet, giving description of all the principal stitches in embroidery. The whole outfit sent for subscriptions to the Blade and the Ledger amounting to $1.50.

NO. 5031, FUDGE APRON—During the cold winter months, when parties and entertainments are some of social features in every home, the young lady or girl will have many an occasion for the use of a fudge apron. This apron is ¾ length, slip-over, stamped on good quality National white crash and we include 3 skeins of floss for working the design. Given for $1.50 in subscriptions to the Blade or Ledger.



No. 5031, Fudge Apron

NO. 5032, GUEST TOWELS—Crocheted and embroidered towels are most popular and fashionable at the present time, and undoubtedly will continue so for several years to come. The two towels shown here are of serviceable grade huck toweling, each measures 14x24 inches, and they are stamped with a very simple design. With each set we supply you with one set of initial transfers (four different styles), one ball of fast color, blue crocheting cotton; three crochet needles, and four skeins of white floss for embroidering the designs. This complete outfit given for $2.00 in subscriptions, new or renewal, to either the Blade or Ledger.



No 5032, Guest Towels.

* * *

Equal to It.

John Galsworthy, the English playwright, tells of the wit of an actor named Littledale, who in one play had to leap into a river to escape a wild beast.

"The stage was so arranged that the river was invisible. Littledale's leap usually ended on a soft mattress in the wings, while a rock was dropped into a tub of water to create a splash. Everything went on all right at rehearsal and the night of actual performance came. When poor Littledale jumped he fell eight feet and landed on an oaken floor with a crash.

"The audience set up a titter. But the heroic Littledale was quite equal to the occasion. 'Heavens!' he shouted, 'the water's frozen!'"

* * *

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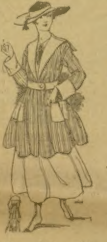
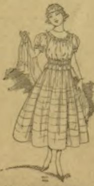
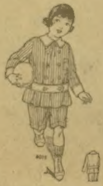


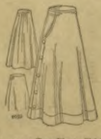
9013 Coat with Dropped Shoulders, Small 34 or 36, Medium 38 or 40, Large 42 or 44 bust.



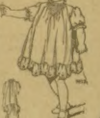
8634 Gathered Blouse, for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.
8884 Gathered Skirt for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



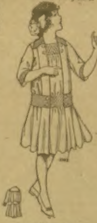
9019 Boy's Suit, 2 to 8 years.



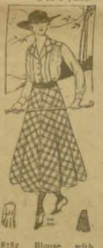
9020 Two-Piece Skirt with or without Pockets, 24 to 34 waist.



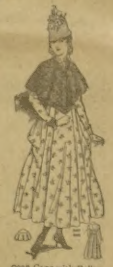
9012 Child's Dress, 1, 2 and 4 years.



8093 Girl's Dress, 8 to 12 years.



8782 Blouse with Tucked Fronts, 34 to 42 bust.
9015 Circular Skirt, 24 to 32 waist.



9007 Cape with Collar, small 34 or 36, medium 38 40, large 42 or 44 bust.
8989 One-Piece Gown, 34 to 42 bust.

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